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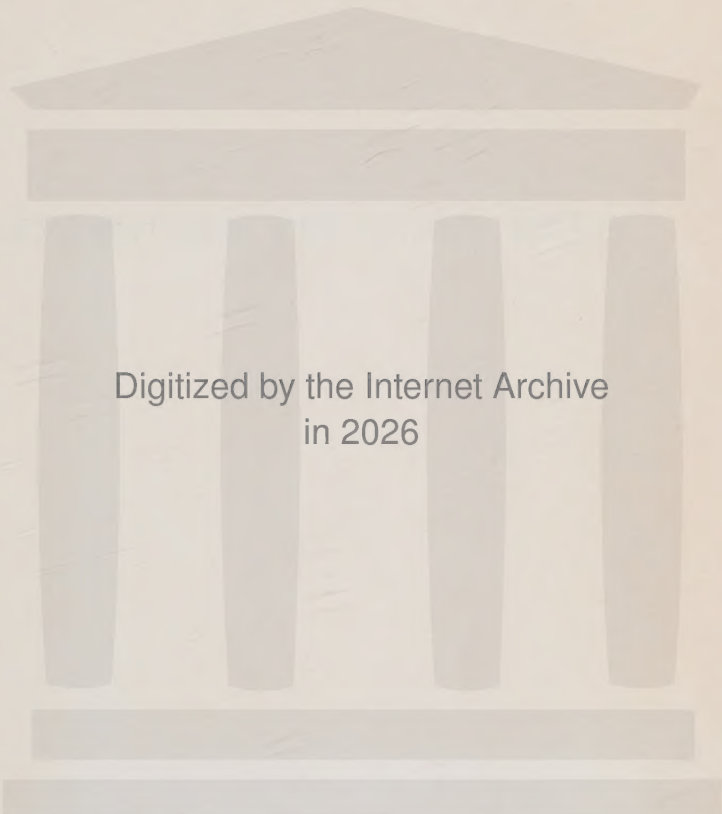
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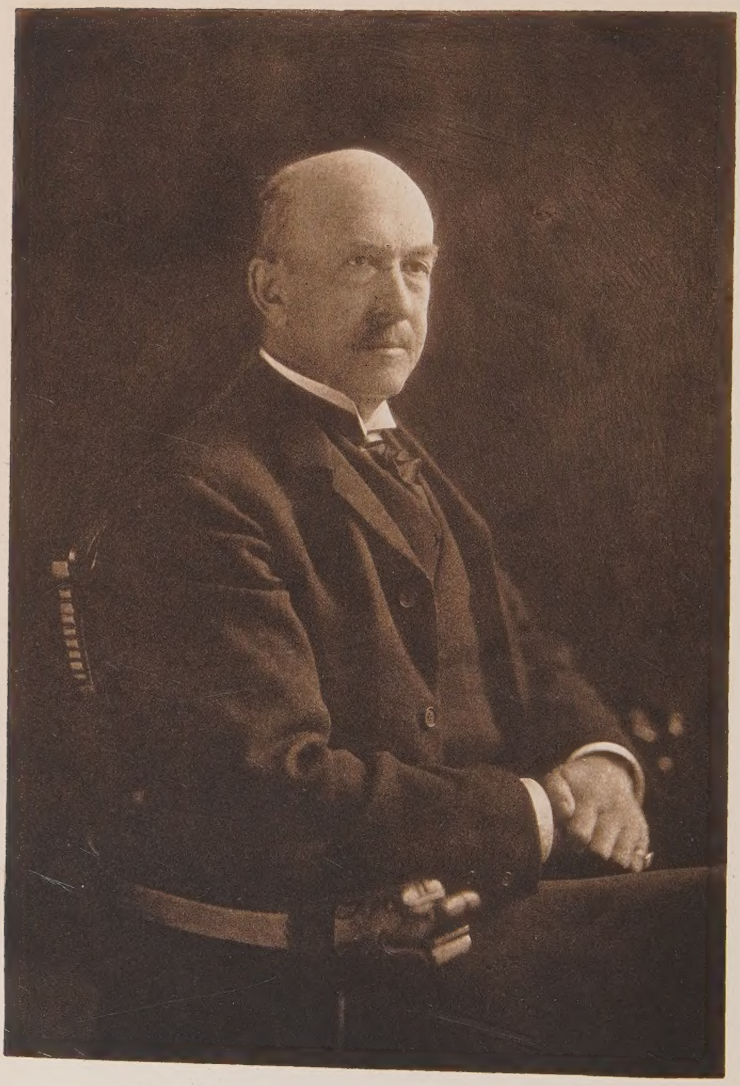

EARTH-HUNGER
AND
OTHER ESSAYS

BY
WILLIAM GRAHAM SUMNER

EDITED BY
ALBERT GALLOWAY KELLER

NEW HAVEN: YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON: HUMPHREY MILFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
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PREFACE

During the three years now elapsed since the publication of "War and Other Essays," it has become increasingly clear to the publishers and to the editor of that collection that their original enterprise should be followed up by another volume or two. There remain a number of Professor Sumner's shorter productions which have never been printed or which have been published in obscure, scattered, or inaccessible places.

I feel this need of extending our enterprise the more strongly because I believe that a great deal of Sumner's writing has not grown old, and is not destined to grow old. It has been impressed upon me, as I have become more familiar with his essays of twenty and thirty years ago, that the issues which he treated, as he treated them, are always and everywhere with us. They are not of one time or one place. They are always with us because they are part of what Sumner so often calls "life here on earth." It was given to him to seize upon social issues in their essential and vital bearings; the blade of his insight never stuck in the husk of a matter.

Now it has seemed to me, in my own experience with Sumner, and in my teaching, that such an attitude toward the questions of societal life is, for the young at least, the one best adapted to open — wrench open, if you will — the gates of the mind and introduce the impulse to independent thinking. I do not mean at all that this result is to be attained by an unresisting acceptance of the forcefully expressed opinions of a compelling reasoner; in fact, I

believe that, in the case of Sumner, many a man has been goaded to think things out for himself for very rage at the conclusive manner in which Sumner used to dispose of some of his pet or traditional notions. Sometimes such a man came to agree with Sumner; again he believed that he had won the right not to assent — but in either case there had come to him an awakening in the matter of his own mental powers and life. This is why so many men who have eventually come to dissent from Sumner's positions, yet look back upon him as an intellectual awakener. The difficult thing about getting a vision in the large is in the attainment of an elevated plane of thought; if someone can lift you to it, you will find room enough there to range away from the exact spot upon which you were originally set down. It is the "lift" which is crucial — and that it is which only the strong and positive man, who has wrought himself up beyond the pull of the trivial and traditional, can give.

I lay a good deal of stress upon these considerations because they are the ones which have led me to continue the task of editor. I see no reason for collections of essays as such; the work of most of us, as it seems to me, must die with us, or before us — it would even be a disservice to galvanize it into a momentary resurrection. But I feel that this is not so with Sumner's work, and so I think it a privilege to assist in making it more readily available in more permanent form.

But this leads me to add that, although I hold the views I have tried to express, I have yet excluded, at least for the present, Sumner's treatment of certain issues which seem to me more technical and local. I have therefore included little on the topics of protectionism and sound money, and on other subjects of a more strictly economic order — although I believe that a number of Sumner's

essays of this type deserve re-publication, and should get it, for the sake of his method of presentation and the breadth of his perspective rather than for the sake of adding to technical economic controversy in any possible way.

The following essays are here printed, so far as I have been able to discover, for the first time: The Teacher's Unconscious Success; The Scientific Attitude of Mind; Earth Hunger; Economics and Politics; Purposes and Consequences; Rights; Equality. We have been able to date all of these except the last three. There is no direct evidence as to the time when these were written, but it is safe to say that they come out of the period between 1900 and 1906. The manuscript of these three seems to form part of the studies which preceded "Folkways" and may have been designed originally to form part of that volume.

Although "Earth Hunger" is the title essay, it has seemed fitting to introduce this volume with Professor Sumner's brief autobiographical sketch, and by two essays which, if not strictly autobiographical, yet reveal certain salient characteristics of the man and of his attitude toward his work.

A. G. KELLER

New Haven, Conn.,
September 17, 1913

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AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF WILLIAM GRAHAM SUMNER

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF WILLIAM GRAHAM SUMNER

I was born at Paterson, N. J., October 30, 1840. My father, Thomas Sumner, was born at Walton-le-Dale, Lancashire, England, May 6, 1808. He came to the United States in 1836. My mother was Sarah Graham. She was born in Oldham, England, in 1819, and was brought to the United States by her parents in 1825. She died when I was eight years old. This is about all I know of my ancestry. My father told me that he had seen his own great-grandfather, who was a weaver in Lancashire. They were all artisans and members of the wages class. It is safe to say that I am the first of them who ever learned Latin and algebra. My grandfather had a good trade, which was ruined by machinery. On account of this family disaster, my father was in every respect a self-educated man, and was obliged to come to America. His principles and habits of life were the best possible. His knowledge was wide, and his judgment excellent. He belonged to the class of men, of whom Caleb Garth in *Middlemarch* is the type. In early life I accepted, from books and other people, some views and opinions which differed from his. At the present time, in regard to those matters, I hold with him and not with the others.

In the year after I was born my father went prospecting through Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York. He came back convinced that, if a man would live as poorly and educate his children as badly in the East as he would

have to in the West, he could do as well in the East. He moved to New England, lived in New Haven a year or two, and settled in Hartford about 1845. I was educated in the public schools of that city. I was clerk in a store for two years, but went back to school to prepare for college.

After graduating I went at once to Europe. I passed the winter of 1863–64 in Geneva, Switzerland, studying French and Hebrew. In April, 1864, I went to Göttingen, where I studied ancient languages and history. In April, 1866, I went to Oxford, where I studied Anglican theology. In that year I was elected tutor at Yale and entered upon the duties in September.

I was ordained Deacon in the Protestant Episcopal Church at Trinity Church, New Haven, December 27, 1867. I resigned the tutorship in March, 1869, to become assistant to the Rector of Calvary Church, New York City. From September, 1870, to September, 1872, I was Rector of the Church of the Redeemer, at Morristown, N. J.

In June, 1872, I was elected Professor of Political and Social Science in Yale College. My life has been spent since that time in trying to fulfil the duties of that position. From 1873 to 1876 I was an alderman of the city of New Haven. In 1876 I was one of the "visiting statesmen," who were sent to New Orleans to try to find out what kind of a presidential election they had in Louisiana in that year. This is the whole of my experience in politics. I found out that I was likely to do more harm in politics than almost any other kind of man, because I did not know the rules of the game and did not want to learn them. Therefore, the adepts at it could play with me in more senses than one. My experience, however, has been very valuable to me. It has enabled

me to gauge the value of the talk we hear about "civics" and "citizenship." I turned back to the studies connected with my college position, and have devoted myself entirely to them. Those studies have expanded so rapidly and greatly that I have been compelled during the whole thirty-two years to narrow the range of my work more and more. I have renounced one branch after another in order to concentrate my efforts on what I could hope to master. In this process I have had to throw away a great amount of work, which I could never hope to finish. When I was fifty years old I broke down in health. I have only partly recovered, and have been obliged to limit my interests as much as possible to the college work. I am now trying to bring into form for publication the results of my studies in the science of society. If life and strength hold out, this will be the sum of what I shall have accomplished. The life of a professor is so simple and monotonous that I know of no other "history" of it that is possible, than what I have just written. No other life could have been so well suited to my taste as this. My relations with students and graduates have always been of the pleasantest, and I think that there can be few relations in life which can give greater satisfaction than these.

THE TEACHER'S UNCONSCIOUS SUCCESS

THE TEACHER'S UNCONSCIOUS SUCCESS

Our respected friend, in honor of whom we are met today, furnishes me the first illustration of the sentiment you have offered me. I remember him as he used to visit the schools of Hartford forty-five or fifty years ago when I was a boy in one of them. We schoolboys were familiar with his figure and I recall him distinctly as we used to see him. Our teachers honored him and taught us to honor him. In some way which we did not understand he embodied the care and providence which was giving us our schooling. We then attributed to him more patriarchal dignity perhaps than he then deserved. We know now that he first introduced some system and regularity, some economy of time and money, into the old happy-go-lucky system of the district schools, but my mind goes back with more affection and reverence still to the man who, in my childhood, seemed to be the responsible moving agent of the whole school system. We thought that he would not work for us unless he loved us and he seemed to have a fatherly care for all the school children in the State. He never spoke to me and I presume never let his eyes rest on me, but I have to thank him for a part of the inspiration which has entered into my life and work. I am a part of his unconscious success.

This case leads us to reflect how much of this kind of success every faithful worker in the cause of education wins without knowing it; and is it not the best success of all? We warn ourselves and we are warned by all our critics that education is something far different from

schooling. Unfortunately they do not necessarily go together. Unfortunately also our people are pinning their faith on schooling. The faith in book-learning is one of the superstitions of the nineteenth century and it enters for a large part into the bequest which the nineteenth century is about to hand over to the twentieth. On the walls of our schoolroom our teacher had pasted up in large letters: "Knowledge is power." Yes, that is what knowledge is. It is power and nothing more. As a power it is like wealth, talent, or any power, that is, it is without any moral element whatever. The moral question always comes in when we ask, in respect to the man who has power: What will he do with it? It is so of wealth. The man who has it can realize purposes which are entirely impossible to the man who has it not. What purposes will the holder of wealth choose? If he chooses one set of purposes he may bring things to pass which the rest of us can only dream of and wish for. If he chooses another set of purposes, he will be only so much the greater curse to himself and all around him than he would be if he were poor. The same is true of talent. The same is true of any other power. It is true of knowledge. The man who has it is equipped for action both with tools and weapons. What will he do with it? If he so chooses he may, by virtue of it, be far more useful to himself, his children, and his country than he would be without it, but if he chooses otherwise, he may simply be a far more efficient and harmful rascal than he would be without it. This is why it is simply a crude and empty superstition to believe that a knowledge of reading, writing, arithmetic, and geography makes good husbands and fathers and citizens. It does not. There is no connection of cause and effect. In truth, half-culture is one of the great curses of our time. Half-culture makes man volatile

and opinionated. It makes them the easy victims of fads and fallacies and makes them stubborn in adhering to whims which they have taken up. It makes them impervious to reason and argument because they hold to their pet ideas with a pertinacity which has a great deal of vanity in it. It makes them quick to talk and slow to think or study. We sometimes rejoice in the amount of reading that our people do in newspapers, magazines, and light literature, and we are multiplying libraries and reading-rooms with an easy confidence that it is all in the right direction. It is like other human devices, however; it is in the main good, but it is not all good. There is one disturbing reflection which we must take earnestly to heart. If a people's desire for literary food is met by light literature, it is satisfied and put at rest by light literature, and then there is no desire or energy to get anything better. The argument against novel reading which we used to hear forty years ago, has almost entirely died out, but it had some sense in it, on this ground if no other. The consumption of vast masses of diluted literary food destroys the tone of the intellect and the moral stamina also.

Such observations and reflections as these force us back again to our resources of moral strength. Where do they lie? Without disparaging the value of homiletical instruction and exhortation, it will be admitted by everybody that it takes character above everything else to make character. Here is where the personality of the teacher has a transcendent function in connection with imparting book-learning. The school educates the teacher quite as much as it educates the scholars. The life and work together under forms which involve discipline and orderly co-operation cannot go on without friction which tells upon both parties. The in-

cidents of the schoolroom easily provoke the temper or the vanity, the jealousy or the rancor of the teacher. Who does not know what pitiless critics scholars are, how sharply they detect evidences of human weakness, and what severe standards they employ? Even parents are exposed to no such criticism. They are shielded, and presumptions are created in their favor which teachers do not enjoy. When it comes to demands upon character there is no profession and no relation in life which makes such heavy demands as teaching.

It would, of course, be absurd to make superhuman demands on teachers, and exaggerated demands could have no other effect than to discourage. Such is not the point to which my thoughts tend. On the contrary I have in mind, in what I say, the encouraging fact that a faithful teacher who is always trying to do the best possible is sure to enjoy a large measure of success of which he or she is not conscious. When I look back to my own school-days I know that two or three of my teachers had decisive effect upon my character and career, yet I have no reason to suppose that any one of them knew that it was so or was to be so. We had one teacher whom I never saw put in a difficult position but what he extricated himself from it in such a way that we all felt that that was just the right way to act in an emergency of that kind. That is the way in which character is educated by character. Its fruits are abundant, and the crop of them is produced over and over again for many a year afterwards, and it is planted and gathered by many workers over many fields.

I was led into this line of thought by my recollections of our honored guest. I think that the reflections I have suggested may be welcome to him in the retrospect of a long career, during which, no doubt, he has had many

failures and disappointments to lament. Like all the rest of us he has, no doubt, felt that the results of his labors were not what he hoped for and had a fair right to expect. Let me assure him that there has been more fruition than he has been aware of. It is the chief purpose of this meeting to assure him of it and to give him that explicit proof of it to which he is entitled.

THE SCIENTIFIC ATTITUDE OF MIND

THE SCIENTIFIC ATTITUDE OF MIND [1]

I HAVE undertaken the duty of addressing you for a few moments in order to welcome you to this society and also to make some suggestions which seem appropriate to the beginning of your connection with it. What we expect this society to do for you is, that it shall confirm your devotion to true science and help to train you in scientific methods of thought and study.

Let us begin by trying to establish a definite idea of what science is. The current uses of the term are both very strict and very loose or vague. Some people use the term as a collective term for the natural sciences; others define science as orderly knowledge. Professor Karl Pearson, in his Grammar of Science,[2] does not offer any definition of science, but he tells the aim of science and its function.

"The classification of facts and the formation of absolute judgments upon the basis of this classification — judgments independent of the idiosyncrasies of the individual mind — is peculiarly the *scope and method of modern science.* The scientific man has above all things, to strive at self-elimination in his judgments, to provide an argument which is as true for each individual mind as for his own. *The classification of facts, the recognition of their sequence and relative significance is the function of science,* and the habit of forming a judgment upon those facts unbiased by personal feeling is characteristic of what we shall term the scientific frame of mind." These

[1] Address to initiates of the Sigma Xi Society, on Mar. 4, 1905. [2] P. 6.

statements we may gladly accept so far as they go, but they are not definitions of science.

I should want to make the definition of science turn upon the *method* employed, and I would propose as a definition: knowledge of reality acquired by methods which are established in the confidence of men whose occupation it is to investigate truth. In Pearson's book, he refers constantly to the opinions and methods of scientific scholars as the highest test of truth. I know of no better one; I know of none which we employ as constantly as we do that one; and so I put it in the definition. I propose to define science as knowledge of reality because "truth" is used in such a variety of senses. I do not know whether it is possible for us ever to arrive at a knowledge of "the truth" in regard to any important matters. I doubt if it is possible. It is not important. It is the pursuit of truth which gives us life, and it is to that pursuit that our loyalty is due.

What seems to me most important is that we should aim to get knowledge of realities, not of phantasms or words. By a phantasm I mean a mental conception which is destitute of foundation in fact, and of relations to the world of the senses. In the Middle Ages all men pursued phantasms; their highest interest was in another world which was a phantasm, and they were anxious about their fate in that world. They tried to provide for it by sacraments and rites which were fantastic in their form, and in their assumed relation to the desired end. They built up a great church corporation and endowed it with a large measure of control of human affairs so that it could provide for welfare in the other world. It had special functions which were fantastic with reference to the end which they were to accomplish because they contained no rational connection between means and

ends. All the societal power which the church did not have was given to the Emperor, because in a certain text of Scripture mention was made of "two swords." The historical period was spent in a war between the Pope and the Emperor to see which should rule the other. The Crusades were an attempt to realize a great phantasm. Chivalry and the devotion to women were phantasms. The societal system was unreal; it assumed that men were originally in a state of slavery and that all rights which they had were due to gift from some sovereign. It resulted that only two men in the world, the Pope and the Emperor, had original and independent rights. The relation of classes, parties, and corporations in the society was therefore both loose and complicated. It is amazing to notice the effect of all this attention to unrealities on all the products of the Middle Ages. People had no idea of reality. Their poetry dealt with arbitrary inventions and demanded of the reader that he should accept tiresome conventions and stereotyped forms. They formed ideas of Cathay such as we meet with in the Arabian Nights, and they were ready to believe that there might be, in Cathay, any animal form which anybody's imagination could conceive, and any kind of a human figure, for instance, one with a countenance on the elbows or the knees. Theologians quarreled about whether Jesus and his disciples abjured property and lived by beggary, and whether the blood which flowed from the side of Jesus remained on earth or was taken up to heaven with him. The most noticeable fact is that all the disputants were ready to go to the stake, or to put the other party to the stake, according as either should prove to have the power. It was the rule of the game as they understood it and played it. It was another striking manifestation of the temper of the times that within

a few days after the capture of Antioch, the poets in the several divisions of the successful army began to write the history of the conflict, not according to facts, but each glorifying the great men of his own group by ascribing to them great deeds such as the current poetry ascribed to legendary heroes. What could more strikingly show the absence of any notion of historic reality?

Now, if you compare our world of ideas with that of the Middle Ages, the greatest difference is that we want *reality* beyond everything else. We do not demand the truth because we do not know where or how to get it. We do not want rationalism, because that is only a philosophy, and it has limitations like any other philosophy. We do not demand what is natural or realistic in the philosophical sense, because that would imply a selection of things, in operation all the time, before the things were offered to us. In zoology and anthropology we want to know all forms which really exist, but we have no patience with invented and imaginary forms. In history we do not allow documents to be prepared which will serve a purpose; to us, such documents would have the character of lies. That they would be edifying or patriotic does not excuse them. Probably modern men have no harder task than the application of the historic sense to cases in those periods of history when it was not thought wrong to manufacture such documents as one's cause required.

The modern study of nature has helped to produce this way of looking at things, and the way of looking at things has made science possible. I want to have the notion of science built on this thirst for reality, and respond to it at every point. There may be knowledge of reality whose utility we do not know, but it would be overbold for any one to say that any knowledge of reality is useless.

Since our ancestors devoted so much attention to phantasms and left us piles of big books about them, one great department of science must be criticism, by which we discern between the true and the false. There is one historical case of this requirement which always rises before my mind whenever I think of the need of criticism — that is witch-persecution. Although the church had a heavy load of blame for this frightful abuse, yet the jurists were more to blame. As to the church also, the Protestants, especially the Puritans of Scotland, were as bad as the Roman Catholics. Witch-persecution is rooted in demonism, which is the oldest, widest, and most fundamental form of religion. Whenever religion breaks down there is always produced a revival of demonism. The developments of it may be traced from early Chaldæa. It was believed that demons and women fell in love and begot offspring. Nightmare, especially in the forms experienced on mountains, led to notions of midnight rides, and Walpurgis-Nacht assemblies; then the notion of obscene rites was added. It was believed that witches could provoke great storms and convulsions of nature; all remarkable instances of calamity or good luck, especially if it affected one or a few, were ascribed to them. Especially hail-storms and tornadoes, which sometimes destroy crops over a very limited area, but spare all the rest, were thought to be their work. It was believed that they could transfer good crops from their neighbors' fields to their own. Here we see how phantasms grow. The bulls of popes summed up and affirmed the whole product as fact. Then, too, all the apparatus of pretended investigation and trial which the Inquisition had developed was transferred to the witch-trials. As women chiefly were charged with witchcraft, the result was that all this accumulation of superstition,

folly, and cruelty was turned against them. If we try to form an idea of the amount of suffering which resulted, our hearts stand still with horror.

Now there are some strong reasons for the faith in witchcraft. Everybody believed that witches existed, that they could enter into contracts with demons, and could get supernatural aid to carry out their purposes in this world. All the accused witches believed this. It was held to be wicked to make use of witches or demons, but it was believed that there were possible ways of accomplishing human purposes by employing them. Consequently when men or women wanted wealth, or office, or honor, or great success, or wanted to inspire love, or to gratify hate, envy, and vengeance, or wanted children, or wanted to prevent other people from having children, this way was always supposed to be open. No doubt very many of them tried it, at least in homely and silly ways — when put to the torture they confessed it. Then, too, somnambulism, dreams, and nightmare took forms which ran on the lines of popular superstition, and many a woman charged with witchcraft did not know but she had been guilty of it to some extent and without conscious knowledge. Again, the Scripture argument for demonism and witchcraft was very strong. It was this pitfall which caught the Protestants; how could they deny that there are any witches when the Bible says: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Witches were persons who had gone over to the side of Satan and his hosts in their war on God; they were enemies of the human race. The deductions from the primary fantastic notion of demons were all derived on direct and indisputable lines, and those deductions ruled the thought of Christian Europe for five hundred years.

What was wanted to put a stop to the folly and wicked-

ness was criticism. The case shows us that we men, including the greatest and best of us, may fall at any time under the dominion of such a mania, unless we are trained in methods of critical thinking. A series of great sceptics from Montaigne to Voltaire met the witch doctrines with scorn and derision. They were not afraid to deny the existence of demons. It appears also that the so-called common-sense of the crowd revolted at the absurdities of witchcraft. Every person who was executed as a witch named, under torture, others, who were then arrested, tortured, and executed; each of these named others, and so the witch-judges found that they were driven on, by judicial execution of the most cruel form, to depopulate a whole territory. It was a critical revolt when they saw this construction of their own conduct and turned against it. When we read the story we are amazed that good and honest men could have gone on for centuries inflicting torture of the extremest kind on old women without the bit of critical reflection which should have led them to ask themselves what they were doing.

Let us not make the mistake of supposing that all follies and manias of this kind are permanently overcome and need not be feared any longer. The roots of popular error are ineradicable; they lie at the bottom of human nature; they can produce new growth and new fruits at any time. In this twentieth century the probable line on which the deductions will be drawn is in politics and civil institutions. The modern world has rejected religious dogmatism, but it has taken up a great mass of political dogmatism, and this dogmatism is intertwined with the interests of groups of men. If you accept the political dogmas of the eighteenth century and begin to build deductions on them you will reach a construction as absurd and false as that of witchcraft. The only security

is the constant practise of critical thinking. We ought never to accept fantastic notions of any kind; we ought to test all notions; we ought to pursue all propositions until we find out their connection with reality. That is the fashion of thinking which we call scientific in the deepest and broadest sense of the word. It is, of course, applicable over the whole field of human interests, and the habit of mind which insists on finding realities is the best product of an education which may be properly called scientific. I have no doubt that, in your lifetime, you will see questions arise out of popular notions and faiths, which will call for critical thinking such as has never been required before, especially as to social relations, political institutions, and economic interests.

Here I may notice, in passing, the difference between science and religion in regard to the habits of thought which each encourages. No religion ever offers itself except as a complete and final answer to the problems of life. No religion ever offers itself as a tentative solution. A religion cannot say: I am the best solution yet found, but I may be superseded tomorrow by new discoveries. But that is exactly what every science must say. Religions do not pretend to grow; they are born complete and fully correct and our duty in regard to them is to learn them in their integrity. Hence Galton says that "the religious instructor, in every creed, is one who makes it his profession to saturate his pupils with prejudice." [1]

Every science contains the purpose and destiny of growth as one of its distinguishing characteristics; it must always be open to re-examination and must submit to new tests if such are proposed. Consequently the modes and habits of thought developed by the study of

[1] Hereditary Genius, p. 210.

science are very different from those developed by the study of religion. This is the real cause, I think, of the antagonism between science and religion which is vaguely felt in modern times, although the interest is lacking which would bring the antagonism into an open conflict. I cannot believe that this attitude will remain constant. I am prepared to believe that some of you may live to see new interest infused into our traditional religion which will produce an open conflict.[1] At present scientific methods are largely introduced into history, archæology, the comparison of religions, and Biblical interpretation, where their effect is far more destructive than the mass of people yet know. When the antagonism develops into open conflict, parties will take sides. It is evident that the position of the parties on all the great faiths and interests of men will differ very widely and that each position will have to be consistent with the fundamental way of looking at the facts of life on which it is founded. It does not seem possible that a scientist and a sacramentarian could agree about anything.

There is another form of phantasm which is still in fashion and does great harm, that is, faith in ideals. Men who rank as strong thinkers put forward ideals as useful things in thought and effort. Every ideal is a phantasm; it is formed by giving up one's hold on reality and taking a flight into the realm of fiction. When an ideal has been formed in the imagination the attempt is made to spring and reach it as a mode of realizing it. The whole process seems to me open to question; it is unreal and unscientific; it is the same process as that by which Utopias are formed in regard to social states, and contains the same fallacies; it is not a legitimate mental

[1] Thomas Aquinas said that "science is sin except as pursued because it leads to a knowledge of God." Summa II, 2, Qu. 167, 1.

exercise. There is never any correct process by which we can realize an ideal. The fashion of forming ideals corrupts the mind and injures character. What we need to practise, on the contrary, is to know, with the greatest exactitude, what is, and then plan to deal with the case as it is by the most approved means.

Let me add a word about the ethical views which go with the scientific-critical way of looking at things. I have mentioned already our modern view of manufactured documents, which we call forged. In regard to history it seems to me right to say that history has value just on account of the truth which it contains and not otherwise. Consequently the historian who leaves things out, or puts them in, for edifying, patriotic, or other effect, sins against the critical-scientific method and temper which I have described. In fact, patriotism is another root of non-reality, and the patriotic bias is hostile to critical thinking.

It must be admitted that criticism is pessimistic. I say that it must be admitted, because, in our time, optimism is regarded as having higher merit and as a duty; that which is pessimistic is consequently regarded as bad and wrong. That is certainly an error. Pessimism includes caution, doubt, prudence, and care; optimism means gush, shouting, boasting, and rashness. The extreme of pessimism is that life is not worth living; the extreme of optimism is that everything is for the best in the best of worlds. Neither of these is true, but one is just as false as the other. The critical temper will certainly lead to pessimism; it will develop the great element of loss, disaster, and bad luck which inheres in all human enterprises. Hence it is popularly considered to consist in fault-finding. You will need to guard against an excess of it, because if you yield to it, it will lame your energies

and deprive you of courage and hope. Nevertheless I cannot doubt that the popular feeling in our time and country needs toning down from a noisy and heedless optimism. Professor Giddings,[1] a few years ago, made a very interesting analysis and classification of books published in this country, from which he thought that he proved, statistically, that the temper of our people now is between ideo-emotional and dogmatic-emotional. By ideo-emotional he means inquiring or curious, and convivial; by dogmatic-emotional he means domineering and austere. We must notice, as limiting this test, that the book-market can bear testimony only to the taste of the "reading public," which is but a very small part of the population, and does not include the masses. Professor Giddings found that 50 per cent of the books published aimed to please and appealed to emotion or sentiment; 40 per cent aimed to convert, and appealed to belief, ethical emotion, or self-interest; 8 per cent aimed to instruct, were critical, and appealed to reason. The other 2 per cent contained all the works of high technical or scientific value, lost really in an unclassifiable residuum. This means that our literature is almost entirely addressed to the appetite for romance and adventure, probable or improbable, to sentimentalism, to theoretical interest in crime, marital infelicity, and personal misfortune, and to the pleasure of light emotional excitement, while a large part of it turns on ethical emotion and ignorant zeal in social matters. This accords with the impression one gets from the newspapers as to what the people like. The predominance of the emotional element in popular literature means that people are trained by it away from reality. They lose the power to recognize truth. Their power to make independent

[1] Psychological Review, VIII, 337.

ethical judgments is undermined, and all value is taken out of their collective opinion on social and political topics. They are made day-dreamers, or philistines, or ready victims of suggestion, to be operated upon by religious fakers, or politicians, or social innovators. What they need is criticism, with all the pessimism which it may bring in its train. Ethics belong to the folkways of the time and place; they can be kept sound and vigorous only by the constant reaction between the traditional rule and the individual judgment. What we must have, on this domain also, is a demand for reality and a trained power to perceive the relation between all human interests and the facts of reality at the time existing.

These are the ideas which it seemed to me most desirable to suggest to you at this moment when you are joining this society. I hope that you will here, by your work, your influence on each other, and all the exercises of the society, develop your zeal for scientific truth, and all the virtues of mind and character which common pursuit of reality may be expected to produce. We cannot welcome you to grand halls and old endowments. You cannot carry on your work under fine paintings, with beautiful furniture, or a rich society library. I will say frankly that I wish you could do so; I wish that we had all the accumulations of time and money which such conveniences would present. I do not doubt, however, that your youth and zeal will suffice for you and we expect that you will make up for all deficiencies by your earnest work. It should be the spirit with which you enter the society to make your connection with it tell on your education. You have been selected as men of earnest purpose and industry. You can do much for each other. Common interest in the same line of work will draw you together. I wish you all prosperity and success.

EARTH HUNGER OR THE PHILOSOPHY OF LAND GRABBING

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[1896]

The most important limiting condition on the status of human societies is the ratio of the number of their members to the amount of land at their disposal. It is this ratio of population to land which determines what are the possibilities of human development or the limits of what man can attain in civilization and comfort.

Unoccupied land has been regarded by at least one economist as a demand for men, using "demand" in the technical economic sense. I should not like to be understood as accepting that view. Wild land or nature cannot be personified as wanting labor — it is not even an intelligible figure of speech. Much less can we think of economic demand as predicable of land or nature. Economic demand is a phenomenon of a market, and it is unreal unless it is sustained by a supply offered in the market in exchange for the thing demanded. If it is really nature that we have in mind, then the globe rolled on through space for centuries on centuries without a laborer upon it. The bare expanse of its surface was the scene of growth, change, and destruction in endless series, and nature was perfectly satisfied. Nature means nothing but the drama of forces in action, and it is only a part of our vain anthropomorphism that we think of its operation as "progressive" in proportion as they tend towards a state of things which will suit us men better than some other state. It is an excessive manifestation of the same sentiment to talk

of wild land as a demand for men. The desert of Sahara makes no demand for men; but nature is fully as well satisfied to make a Sahara, where such is the product of her operations, as to make the wheat fields of Iowa or Dakota. Even in Iowa and Dakota, nature offers men no wages for labor. There are the land, the sunshine, and the rain. If the men know how to use those elements to get wheat there, and if they will work hard enough for it, they can get it and enjoy it; if not, they can lie down and die there on the fertile prairie, as many a man did before the industrial organization had expanded widely enough to embrace those districts. Nature went on her way without a throb of emotion or a deviation by a hair's breadth from the sequence of her processes.

It is by no means in the sense of any such rhetorical flourish or aberration that I say that the widest and most controlling condition of our status on earth is the ratio of our numbers to the land at our disposal. This ratio is changing all the time on account of changes which come about either in the numbers of the men or in the amount of the land. The amount of the land, again, is not a simple arithmetical quantity. As we make improvements in the arts a single acre is multiplied by a new factor and is able to support more people. All the improvements in the arts, of whatever kind they are, have this effect, and it is by means of it that, other things remaining the same, they open wider chances for the successive generations of mankind to attain to comfort and well-being on earth. All our sciences tell on the same ratio in the same way. Their effect is that by widening our knowledge of the earth on which we live, they increase our power to interpose in the play of the forces of nature and to modify it to suit our purposes and preferences. All the developments of our social organization have the same effect.

We are led by scientific knowledge, or driven by instinct, to combine our efforts by co-operation so that we can make them more efficient, — and "more efficient" means getting more subsistence out of an acre, so that we can support more people, or support the same number on a higher grade of comfort. This alternative must be borne in mind throughout the entire discussion of our subject. When we have won a certain power of production, we can distribute it in one of two ways: we can support a greater number or we can support the same number better; or we can divide it between the two ways, employing a part in each way.

Here comes in what we call the "standard of living." A population of high intelligence, great social ambition, and social self-respect or vanity will use increased economic power to increase the average grade of comfort, not to increase the numbers. The standard of living is a grand social phenomenon, but the phrase has been greatly abused by glib orators and philosophers. The standard of living does not mean simply that we all vote, that we are fine fellows and deserve grand houses, fine clothes, and good food, simply as a tribute to our nobility. The men who start out with the notion that the world owes them a living generally find that the world pays its debt in the penitentiary or the poorhouse. Neither is the standard of living an engine which economists and reformers can seize upon and employ for their purposes. The standard of living is a kind of industrial honor. It costs a great deal to produce it and perhaps still more to maintain it. It is the fine flower of a high and pure civilization and is itself a product or result, not an instrumentality. If by careful education and refined living a man has really acquired a high sense of honor, you can appeal to it, it is true, and by its response it furnishes

a most effective security for wide-reaching principles of action and modes of behavior; but the more anyone appreciates honor in character, the less he likes to invoke it loudly or frequently. It is too delicate to be in use every day. It is too modest to be talked about much. If a man brags of his honor you know that he has not got much, or that it is not of the right kind.

It is so with the standard of living. The social philosopher who realizes what it is, knows that he must not use it up. It is not to be employed as a means for economic results. On the contrary, to cultivate a high standard of living is the highest end for which economic means can be employed. For a high standard of living costs, and it costs what it is hardest for men to pay, that is, self-denial. It is not a high standard of living for a man to be so proud that he will not let his children go barefoot, incurring debts for shoes which he never intends to pay for; the question is whether he will go without tobacco himself in order to buy them. The standard of living is, therefore, an ethical product; and a study of the way in which it is produced out of social and economic conditions is useful to sweep away a vast amount of easy and empty rhetoric about the relations of ethical and economic phenomena, by which we are pestered in these days. The standard of living reacts on the social organism in the most effective manner, not by any mystical or transcendental operation, but in a positive way and as a scientific fact. It touches the relation of marriage and the family and through them modifies the numbers of the population; that is, it acts upon that side of the population-to-land ratio which we are considering.

Let us not fail to note, in passing, how economic, ethical, and social forces act and react upon each other. It is only for academical purposes that we try to separate

them; in reality they are inextricably interwoven. The economic system and the family system are in the closest relation to each other and there is a give and take between them at every point. What we call "ethical principles" and try to elevate into predominating rules for family and economic life are themselves only vague and inconclusive generalizations to which we have been led, often unconsciously, by superficial and incompetent reflection on the experiences which family and economic life, acting far above and beyond our criticism or control, have suggested to us.

So far we have seen that all the discoveries and inventions by which we find out the forces of Nature and subjugate them to our use, in effect increase the supporting power of the land, and that the standard of living, by intelligently ordering the way in which we use our added power, prevents the dispersion of it in the mere maintenance of a greater number.

It must further be noticed that all our ignorances, follies, and mistakes lessen the supporting power of the land. They do not prevent numbers from being born, but they lessen the fund on which those who are born must live, or they prevent us from winning and enjoying what the means at our disposal are really able to produce. All discord, quarreling, and war in a society have this effect. It is legitimate to think of Nature as a hard mistress against whom we are maintaining the struggle for existence. All our science and art are victories over her, but when we quarrel amongst ourselves we lose the fruits of our victory just as certainly as we should if she were a human opponent. All plunder and robbery squander the fund which has been produced by society for the support of society. It makes no difference whether the plunder and robbery are legal or illegal in form. Every violation of

security of property and of such rights as are recognized in society has the same effect. All mistakes in legislation, whether sincere and innocent or dictated by selfish ambition and sordid greed, have the same effect. They rob the people of goods that were fairly theirs upon the stage of civilization on which they stood. All abuses of political power, all perversion of institutions, all party combinations for anti-social ends have the same effect. All false philosophies and mistaken doctrines, although it may take a long time to find out which ones are false, still have the same effect. They make us cast away bread and seize a stone.

All the old institutions which have outlived their usefulness and become a cover for abuses and an excuse for error, so that the wars and revolutions which overthrow them are a comparative good, must also be regarded as clogs which fetter us in our attempts to grasp what our knowledge and labor have brought within our reach. In short, all these evils and errors bring upon us penalties which consist in this: that while with the amount of land at our disposal, its productiveness being what it is, and the power of our arts being what it is, and our numbers being what they are, we might reach a certain standard of well-being, yet we have fallen short of it by just so much as the effect of our ignorances, follies, and errors may be. We can express the effect of our mis-doing and mis-thinking by regarding it as so much subtracted from the resources and apparatus with which we are carrying on the struggle for existence. We make the mistakes, in large part, because we cannot convince ourselves what is error and what is truth. The element of loss and penalty which I have described is the true premium which is offered us for finding out where the truth lies. The greatest good we can expect from our scientific investi-

gations and from our education is to free us from these errors and to save us from these blunders. In this view, it is certain that a correct apprehension of social facts and laws would advance the happiness of mankind far more than any discovery of truth about the order of physical nature which we could possibly make.

From one point of view, history may be regarded as showing the fluctuations in the ratio of the population to the land. The population of Greece underwent a very great reduction, during the three centuries before the Christian era, from the numbers which lived in great prosperity in the heroic period of the fifth century before Christ. The reasons for this have never been very satisfactorily ascertained, but it may have been through the laziness and general worthlessness of the population. The population of the Italian peninsula decreased at a high ratio during the period of the Roman empire, and great areas of land went out of cultivation. The Roman system, after stimulating the whole Roman world to high prosperity by giving peace and security, next used up and exhausted the whole world, including Italy. In western Europe, the cultivated area and the population increased and decreased together during the whole feudal period, according as anarchy and violence or peace and security prevailed for periods and over areas. We may regard the maintenance of a great number in high comfort on a given area as the standard towards which success in solving economic and social problems is carrying us, or from which we are falling away when we fail to solve the problems of the time correctly. Taking wide sweeps of history, it is possible to see the "tides in the affairs of men" which are marked by these ebbs and flows of the population against the areas of waste land.

It was the existence of waste land in the countries of

western Europe during the Middle Ages that was all the time influencing the fate of the servile classes. The waste had high importance in the manor system; but as slow improvements were brought about in agriculture, the importance of the waste declined. The lord desired to increase his income by reducing it to tillage, and for this purpose he created tenures upon it on behalf of young men of the servile class, the terms of which were easier than those of the ancient and traditional tenures; or he allowed tenants to create petty holdings out of the waste on special terms which gave them a chance to win capital. However slight the claims were which the servile classes had upon the waste by law and custom, nevertheless the mass of wild land existing in and through the country was in fact a patrimony of theirs; its economic effect upon their status and future was a thing which no laws or customs could cut off. The wars, famines, and pestilences which decimated their ranks were a blessing to those who survived and who found themselves possessed of a monopoly of labor over against a superabundance of land. That is the economic status which gives the laborer control of the market and command of the situation.

It was this state of things which freed the servile classes of France, England, and northern Italy. An advance in the arts by several great inventions greatly assisted the movement. The rise of the dynastic states, establishing civil institutions with greater security, peace, and order, worked in the same direction. The Church had been preaching doctrines for a dozen centuries which were distinctly unfavorable to servitude, and which did avail to produce conscientious misgivings and erratic acts hostile to servitude. The influence of these teachings is not to be denied, but it was trifling compared with the great economic changes which have been mentioned, in

bringing about the emancipation of the servile classes. Here we have the reason for the earth hunger of the mass of mankind. It is that the condition of things which favors the masses, always assuming that the guarantees of peace and order allow of industrial development, is one in which the area of land is large in proportion to the population. The servile classes contributed little to their own emancipation except a dull and instinctive pushing or shirking by which they were enabled to win whatever amelioration of their status the changes in motion might bring to them. Often their prejudices, ignorance, and stupidity led them to oppose their own interest and welfare. It was the educated and middle classes which, by thought and teaching, wrought out all the better knowledge and, so far as human wit had anything to do with it, — which indeed was not to any great extent — broke the way for a new order of things; and these classes, too, acted in general selfishly or short-sightedly.

In any true philosophy of the great social changes, especially the emancipation of the servile classes at the end of the Middle Ages in the leading nations of western Europe, we must look upon the new power of production of the means of subsistence from the soil, in proportion to the numbers who were to share it, as the true explanation of those changes. The living men had won new power, new command over the conditions of life. They might abuse or waste that power, but when they had it, their greater welfare could be no great mystery. The expansion of life in every social domain did upset ideas and philosophies. It produced a religious and ecclesiastical revolution and entailed upon the civilized world religious wars which produced a vast squandering of the new power — for all history teaches us that it is idle to hope that added power will be employed simply to go

forward to simple and direct blessing of mankind. On the contrary, men are sure to go to fighting over it in one relation or another. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were full of wars which are interpreted in one way or another according to their immediate aspects, but which really were struggles of men, families, classes, and parties for the possession, control, and advantage of the new economic power. It is, however, a great and instructive fact to notice that, although the labor class knew least about the case, had least share in it, and were least considered by the active parties in it, they won the most by it. Everybody was working for them, not out of love for them, or out of intention, but because it was not possible to help it.

Here we must be on our guard against a fallacy which is almost universal in connection with this matter. It is constantly denied, especially by reformers and revolutionists, that the labor class has won anything by the developments of modern civilization. It appears that the basis for this assertion is the fact that there were peasant, labor, and pauper classes centuries ago and that there are such still. A moment's reflection shows that this is no proof. It would be necessary to show that these classes are now the descendants of persons who formed the same classes in former centuries. Such is not the case. The merchants and bankers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were of humble origin. As they came out of the towns of that period, there is every reason to believe that, if their ancestry were traceable, we should find that they had sprung, two or three centuries earlier, from servile or menial origin. After enriching themselves, they bought land and "founded families." They formed alliances, as soon as possible, with offshoots of the feudal nobility. The modern nobility of England and France

has never been feudal. It is really a class of enriched citizens who have retired and become landholders, so that their power is in wealth. They have, therefore, with few exceptions, come up from the lower, and in the great majority of cases from the lowest, classes, as would be seen if the ancestral stream were followed far enough back. Having once passed the barrier, they are counted and count themselves amongst the nobles; and since the noble class, as a class, has continued, the movement of emancipation, enfranchisement, and enrichment, which has been acting on the labor class through its most efficient families, is lost sight of. There has been a counter-movement which is also almost universally unknown or ignored — that of impoverished families and persons of the nobility down into the ranks of trade and labor.

In the enumeration of the great forces of class change which operated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, I have reserved one for more special attention. The adventurous voyagers who began to explore the outlying parts of the earth in the fifteenth century thought little and cared less about the peasants and artisans at home; but it was they more than any others who were fighting for the fortunes of those classes in the future. The very greatest, but, so far as I have seen, least noticed significance of the discovery of America was the winning of a new continent for the labor class. This effect was not distinctly visible until the nineteenth century, because this new patrimony of the labor class was not available until the arts of transportation were improved up to the requisite point at which the movement of men and products could be easily accomplished. Then, as we have seen in our time, the movement of men one way and food the other developed to great proportions. Is it not true,

then, that this is the great significance of the discovery of America, and that we have as yet barely come to the point where we can see its significance? It is only later that the colonization of Australia has become important, and it is only at this moment that the colonization of Africa is beginning to intensify the same effect. What is that effect? It is that when the pressure of population on land in western Europe was becoming great, the later improvements in the arts — above all the use of steam and the opening of the outlying continents — have, in two ways at the same time, relieved that pressure. This combination has produced an industrial revolution, which is bringing in its train revolutions in philosophy, ethics, religion, politics, and all other relations of human society; for whenever you touch economic and industrial causes, you touch those which underlie all the others and whose consequences will inevitably ramify through all the others. The philosophers and all the resolution-makers of every grade come running together and shouting pæans of victory to the rising power and the coming glory; and, therefore, they claim that they have made it all. It is totally false. They are themselves but the product of the forces, and all their philosophies and resolutions are as idle as the waving of banners on the breezes. Democracy itself, the pet superstition of the age, is only a phase of the all-compelling movement. If you have abundance of land and few men to share it, the men will all be equal. Each landholder will be his own tenant and his own laborer. Social classes disappear. Wages are high. The mass of men, apart from laziness, folly, and vice, are well off. No philosophy of politics or ethics makes them prosperous. Their prosperity makes their political philosophy and all their other creeds. It also makes all their vices, and imposes on them a set of fallacies produced

out of itself. It is only necessary to look about us in the world of to-day to see how true this all is.

We may be very sure that the wheat from America has had far more effect on ideas in Europe than the ideas from America, and that the Old World aristocracies need care little for American notions if only American competition would not lower the rent of land. For the outlying continents affect not only those who go to them but also the whole labor class who stay at home. Even while they stay there the pressure of the whole reachable land-supply weighs upon the labor market and the land market at home; and it makes wages high, food cheap, and the rent of land low, all at once. That is what exalts the laborer and abases the landed aristocrat, working both ways in behalf of democracy and equality. To it we can trace the wild passion for equality and all the leveling philosophy of the age. This is what makes that passion and that philosophy so irresistible, whether for the weal or the woe of the human race. For each man to have a wide area at his disposal, whether actually or only by economic effect spreading through the industrial organization, means that he has the conditions of existence within his control, that he is not ground down by poverty, that he is forced to seek no man's protection, that he is cowed by no fear, that he is independent and "free," that he can provide for his family without care and can accumulate capital too. If you ask him the reasons for all this, he will probably begin to talk about institutions and doctrines; but if you will study the case, you will find that the same forces made him and the institutions too; and his faith in the institutions is like that of a savage who thinks that he would not have had success in hunting but for the fetish around his neck.

We may now see the real philosophy of colonization.

It is not simply because an old habitat becomes too crowded, although it is true that there is a kind of inertia, consisting of habit, love of home, fear of the unknown, differences of language, and so on, which keeps population settled until stress is felt. There is a great economic advantage in spreading such population as there is over all the land there is, although they cover it but thinly. This economic advantage is accompanied by a great social disadvantage. In a scattered population the social organization is low and the social activities are weak. Such institutions as churches, schools, libraries, and museums, which flourish only in great centers of population, are feeble or non-existent. The spread of population over a great area of land, however, puts the first absolute necessities of existence within easy reach of those who have nothing but muscular strength at their disposal. The internal movement of population in the United States has illustrated all this most obviously. The social inertia which has been mentioned is less effective in our old states to keep people from going to the new states than it is in Europe to prevent emigration to the new countries. Hence we find that Iowa has been largely settled by emigrants from Illinois, and Montana is now being settled by emigrants from Iowa. This is the phenomenon of earth hunger, the apparently insatiable desire to get more land; and the reason for it lies in the facts which have been mentioned. With more land, there are higher wages, because no one will work for wages which are convertible into less goods than the laborer could get out of the land when used in the most lavish and wasteful manner. With more land, the manual unskilled laborer is raised in comparison with the skilled and educated laborer, that is, the masses are raised in comparison with the classes. When there is plenty of land, the penalties

of all social follies, vices, and ignorance are light. Each man has plenty of the "rights of man" because he need only *be*, in order to be a valuable member of society; he does not need high training and education, as he would in an old and crowded society with a strict organization, high discipline, intense competition, and weighty sanctions upon success or failure.

These facts of the social order are of the most fundamental and far-reaching importance. They are the facts which control the fate of the human race and produce the great phenomena which mark ages of history. They are the facts which, since the great geographical explorations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, have spread the population of the European nations over the globe. The most enterprising nations seized the advantage first and have pushed it farthest. The movements of population have been accelerated by all the inventions which have facilitated transportation and communication.

The only peoples who are affected by this redistribution of population are those who are enlightened enough to feel the forces which are bringing it about. In spreading over the globe, they have come in contact with the old populations which already occupied the outlying regions and who were on lower stages of civilization. The earth hunger of the civilized men has produced a collision of the civilized and the uncivilized, in which the latter have often perished. Up to the present time, only one of the outlying nations — Japan — has appeared able, as a nation, to fall into its place in the new order of things and to march on with it. The inevitable doom of those who cannot or will not come into the new world system is that they must perish. Philanthropy may delay their fate, and it certainly can prevent any wanton and cruel hastening of it; but it cannot avert it because it is brought

on by forces which carry us all along like dust upon a whirlwind.

Here we have reached a point at which an important distinction must be made. So far I have spoken of those phenomena of earth hunger which are economic and social. Men want more land without assignable limit, because in that way they get a good living more easily and improve their class position. Let us call this economic earth hunger to distinguish it from political earth hunger, which will now demand our attention; for no sooner have men begun to spread over the earth and colonize it than the question of political jurisdiction over the new countries must arise. Is this jurisdiction a care and a burden; or is it an enjoyable good and a means of glory? This question has not yet been answered. I hope to throw some light on it. Hitherto great colonies and dependencies and vast possessions in outlying territories have been regarded as producing national greatness and ministering to national glory; and to this day the civilized nations are acting as if it were the simplest common sense to seize more territory if at any time it was possible. By political earth hunger, therefore, I mean the appetite of states for territorial extension as a gratification of national vanity.

The distinction between economic earth hunger and political earth hunger is to be very carefully noted. If there is good wheat land in Manitoba, the people of Minnesota and Iowa will want to go there and get the use of it. It is not because they have not enough where they are — there is no such conception as enough when more can be had. It is because they find an economic advantage in spreading over more. If they did not, they would not go. This is economic earth hunger. There is, however, in Manitoba, a civilized government with law, rights, and police; such being the case, there is no need

that those who emigrate thither should assume the civil jurisdiction. In the case of Texas, on the other hand, in the early days of its settlement there was such need; the political extension was needed to support the economic extension, because Mexico was not furnishing the guarantees of peace and order. Everything in connection with that matter was construed by its bearings on slavery; and that meant, on the distribution of political power in our own body politic. The people of New England then denounced the economic earth hunger as well as the political earth hunger. In a calmer view of the retrospect, both appear justifiable in that case. The later aggression on Mexico and the appropriation of her territory was another matter. Still again, when, in our recent war flurry, it was proposed to conquer Canada, it was a case of genuine political earth hunger, which had no justification in anything, but was a project of pure outrage, cruelty, and aggression.

There are two very different modes of exploiting the outlying regions of the globe, which need to be distinguished one from the other. Civilized men may go out to spend a few years winning such wealth as they can, with the intention of returning and enjoying it at home; or they may go to establish new homes, expecting that their descendants will reside in the new countries. The latter class alone are colonists, in the proper sense of the term. The English have far surpassed all other nations in the extent to which they have been true colonists, and that is the reason why they have held a more secure foothold in a greater number of places than any other European nation. We must count our own country into their achievements in this respect. The same energy and enterprise which made them open this country to settlement has made them open others, the jurisdiction of which

they still retain. "Land grabbing" is only a more colloquial expression for earth hunger; but it must be admitted that to grab land for the purpose of settling and colonizing is to perform a far greater service to our race than to grab it for the sake of exploiting its riches and then leaving it in order to spend the product in European luxury.

Rodbertus, the German socialist, interpreted the last three hundred years of exploration and colonization as an exploitation and consumption of the outlying parts of the globe by the old centers of civilization. In this observation he gave proof of a more philosophical view of the phenomena than anyone else had taken. Let us see how far it was true. We have already had occasion to notice that the Roman empire was a grand system of exhaustion and consumption of all the rest of the world by the Roman city. It was the study of this fact which led Rodbertus to the observation which has been quoted; he regarded the modern movements of world-commerce and colonization as having the same character. If the people of the civilized nations of Europe go out to the ends of the earth only to exploit them in the way which I have described, and if, in that process, they exterminate the aborigines, then the view which Rodbertus suggests has a great deal of truth in it. If the European nations carve up the globe into sections which they appropriate and govern with a view to their own interests only, maintaining the political jurisdiction for that purpose only, and fighting with each other for the plunder, then his view is the right one; and the whole extension of commerce and colonization for three hundred years past has been a system of extortion, oppression, and greed. If, on the other hand, the system of commerce and colonization has consisted in planting and building up commonwealths in

America, Australia, and South Africa, to become independent centers of civilization, self-governing communities, developing their own powers for their own interests and entering into the world's commerce, by which all the people of the globe share all the resources of the globe, then the observation of Rodbertus is a calumny and not the truth.

As a fact of history, we know that the former of these systems of relation between Europe and the outlying continents did prevail until the present century. It is not extinct yet. Spain to a considerable degree and France to a less degree still cling to the notion of dependent colonies as things worth having for what the mother country, in antagonism to their own interest and certainly in antagonism to that of any other European nation, can get out of them. Germany has only entered upon colonial enterprise within this generation, and she seems to be disposed to develop her colonial policy quite upon the old lines. The policy of England in this entire matter is so much more enlightened than that of any other nation that it stands upon a separate plane and conforms to the second of the two systems which I have described above as completely as if Canada, Australia, and South Africa were actually independent commonwealths like the United States. In regard to all these outlying states, the European hegemony of the globe is entirely broken, and they constitute, with the leading European states, a great family of equal commonwealths which, taken in its entirety, constitutes civilized society. In this aspect earth hunger appears less sordid than in the days of the colonial system. It is only a name for the process by which the human race occupies its patrimony, and by which civilization overcomes barbarism throughout the earth. He who supposes, however, that this process can

go on smoothly and peacefully must be little versed in history or in human nature.

Two systems of relation between the old centers of population and the outlying continents have been distinguished: one of which was created by the European states as soon as the outlying continents were opened; the other of which was introduced by the revolt of these North American colonies in 1775 and has been further built up by the English colonies and the United States since. The former system was the "colonial system." According to that, Europe was the head of the globe, in relation to which all the outlying parts were placed as subordinate members. The statesmen and diplomats of Europe around their council tables quarreled and strove with each other and allotted amongst themselves the divisions which they made. The colonists participated in these strifes. Our colonists, as we well know, had a "policy" as long as the French owned Canada, the Spaniards Florida, and the Dutch New York. War was always welcome in Europe because it gave a chance to seize another country's outlying possessions; war was always welcome here because it gave the colonists a chance to try to drive the French off the continent. Our historians accept this policy as sound and approve of it; but what did the colonists gain by driving the French out of Canada, or what harm would it have done, politically speaking, if they had stayed there until this day? Economically Canada would not probably have been as rapidly or wisely developed as it has been. In the Revolutionary War, that habit of looking at things which had become traditional in the colonies made it seem a matter of the first necessity to conquer Canada or to force her to join the revolt, although she chose not to do so. The only effects of the fact that she has been outside which are dis-

cernible, are that we have been free from some race and religious discords which would have tormented us if she had been in, and that we have not been allowed to have free trade with her as we should have had if she had been in. Our congressional and newspaper statesmen agree that this latter has been a great gain to us, or that free trade with Canada would have been a great harm; but within a few months they have manifested an eager disposition to conquer Canada, as if free trade with her would be a great blessing, provided that we could get at it through a war of conquest and could impose it by compulsion, and provided also that we could, by absorbing her, get the race war and the religious war added to our political burdens at the same time. These are the paradoxes and follies of earth hunger on its political side. On the south we quarreled with Spain as long as she held Florida and Louisiana; then we quarreled with Mexico until we had taken Texas and California. We have inherited our full share of the appetite which I have called political earth hunger. Internal troubles and the time required to digest the last meal have allayed it for a period, but it will awaken again.

Earth hunger is the wildest craving of modern nations. They will shed their life blood to appease it. It gratifies national vanity and economic expansion both at once. No reasoning can arrest it and no arguments satisfy it. At the present moment the states of Europe are carving up Africa as they carved up America in the eighteenth century. They set about the process ten years ago with most commendable deliberation, and with an attempt to establish rules of order for the process; but they are already snarling and growling at each other over the process, like hungry tigers over their prey. Germany and Italy, the two latest colonizers and the two whose domestic

burdens and conditions fit them least for colonial enterprise, are the most eager and rapacious of all.[1] The notion is that colonies are glory. The truth is that colonies are burdens — unless they are plundered, and then they are enemies. Russia is spreading her control over central Asia, although the internal cohesion of her empire is so weak that it will probably break in pieces under any great strain. France, after enormous losses in Tonkin, has just conquered Madagascar and joined England in carving up Siam.

The confusion between the economic use and the political jurisdiction is one of the strongest and most mischievous with which we have to deal. The best thing which could happen, from our point of view, is that England should "grab" all the land on the globe which is not owned by some first-class power. She would govern it all well, on the most enlightened and liberal principles, and we could all go to it for pleasure or gain as our interests might dictate. She would then have all the trouble, care, and responsibility, and we should all share the advantages. If there is a gold mine in Guiana and if England gets the political jurisdiction of it, the English nation or exchequer will not get a grain of gold from the mine; if Englishmen get some of it, they can only do so by going to the mine and digging as individuals. Individuals of any other nationality can go there and do the same; if any Americans want to go there, they will undoubtedly have better chances if the civil jurisdiction of the district is English than if it is Venezuelan.

[1] In the few days since this paper was written, Italy has suffered a defeat in her colonial extension, which not only proves that she is forcing it as pure aggression against a local power competent to maintain a state, but also puts her face to face with a fatal alternative: she must either abandon her colonial enterprise, or she must prosecute it by new sacrifices which will bring her to bankruptcy, and perhaps to anarchy.

So we see that, although the grossest errors and abuses of the old colonial system have been abandoned, the point of view and the philosophy of that system are by no means abandoned. Earth hunger in its political aspect is as strong as ever. The political philosophy of the colonial system — against which the Americans revolted in 1775 — is as fully accepted in our Congress now as it was in the English Parliament in 1775. The doctrines of that system were all repeated in the debate on the proposition to annex Hawaii two years ago, and the debates of this winter have been full of them. The one argument which threatened for a time to carry the annexation of Hawaii was that if we did not take it, England would. That was an eighteenth century argument, and its strength showed how little advance we have made in having our own doctrines. The English statesmen declared that they would not take it if they could possibly help it and that they wished that we would take it and govern it. That was a nineteenth century argument.

Now let us not exaggerate, especially by ignoring what is sound and true in the old doctrines. Our own contests with Spain in Florida and Louisiana were unavoidable; she was not competent to govern her dependencies in a way to make them safe neighbors; she did not fulfil her duties in international law and comity. In Louisiana she held the mouth of the Mississippi River and tried to use her position to make the river and the Gulf of Mexico Spanish waters. Such pretensions were inadmissible. They rested on obsolete doctrines. She did not accept or fulfil the duties which would have devolved upon her in consistency with her own doctrines. Her claims were based on abstract rights which she alleged and which, if they had been admitted, would have been purely dogmatic. They did not rest on facts, or relations, or an adjustment

of mutual interests; and they were not maintained with due responsibility such as must always go with a claim of right. The case was one, therefore, in which a civilized state of inferior rank could not maintain its hold on territory against a civilized state of higher rank. It was only another phase of the case presented by uncivilized tribes which try to hold territory against civilized colonists. There is, therefore, some truth to be admitted in the doctrine of "manifest destiny," although the doctrine is, like most doctrines in politics, a glib and convenient means of giving an appearance of rationality to an exercise of superior force. The truth in the doctrine is that an incompetent holder will not be able, as a matter of fact and in the long run, to maintain possession of territory when another nation which will develop it according to its capacity is ready to take it. A contemporary instance is furnished by the Transvaal, where the Boers certainly cannot maintain their independence and authority unless they prove themselves competent to maintain such civil institutions as are adequate to further the development of the territory.

Furthermore, civilized nations may find themselves face to face with the necessity of assuming the jurisdiction over territory occupied by uncivilized people, in order to police it and give local peace, order, and security, so that industry and commerce may be prosecuted there. The European nations now have this necessity in Africa. The fact remains, however, that the use of the land for production and the political jurisdiction of the territory are two entirely different things. What men want is to get at the land so as to till it and otherwise use it for industrial purposes; the political jurisdiction is a burden which is just so much of a drawback from the gain of using the land. If the industrial use could be got without taking

the political jurisdiction, it would be far better. In other words, if the natives of any territory could maintain the customs and institutions which are necessary in order that peaceful industry and commerce may go on, that is a state of things which is far more desirable than that there should be any supersession of the native authority by any civilized state. The latter step is an irksome and harmful necessity for the state which makes it.

As illustrations of the principles here suggested, we may notice the following cases. There can be no need for any civilized state to assume the government of Japan, while it is very possible that there may soon be need for superseding the native government of China. There is need for superseding the native government of Turkey, and nothing prevents it but the jealousy of the Christian governments towards each other. There was need a few years ago for superseding the native government of Egypt; the country was in anarchy and its position on the road to India made that unendurable. It has been, is, and will be necessary for states to extend their political jurisdiction over outlying territory, whether they do it willingly or unwillingly. Nothing that has been said about the political aspect of earth hunger should be understood as denying or ignoring that; but this necessity is presented as an unwelcome burden and not in the least as a glorious achievement of prosperity and profit.

The most striking instance of all is that of Cuba as our statesmen are now forcing it upon us. It is possible that the island may fall into anarchy and that it might become necessary for us to take it under our control; but measures are now proposed which would set in train a movement for us to take it as an appropriation of a property supposed to be valuable; that is, as a satisfaction of greed, not as submission to an unwelcome duty. If we should

so take it, we should find ourselves face to face with an alternative: either to hold it as a dependency or to take it into our Union and let it help to govern us. One branch of the dilemma is as appalling as the other. The fathers of this republic created a peculiar form of confederated state formed of democratic republics. They meant to secure us a chance to live in peace, happiness, and prosperity, free from the social burdens which had cursed the civilized nations of the Old World. We were to be free from war, feudalism, state church, balance of power, heavy taxation, and what Benjamin Franklin called the "pest of glory." We were to have none of the traditions which made a nation's "greatness" depend on the pomp and ceremony of courts and the luxury of great officers. We were to have no grand diplomacy and no "high politics," as the French and Germans call it. High politics are those great questions of national policy which are reserved for royal persons and great dignitaries of church and state to decide. They might also be called so because they "come high" to the common people. But if we are to have what the fathers of the republic planned for us, we must submit to the limitations which are inevitable in the plan; and one of them is that we can never have an imperial policy and can hold no subject dependencies. There is no place for them in the system, and the attempt to hold and administer them would produce corruption which would react on our system and destroy it. On the other hand, the old Federalists were right when they insisted that we could not carry on our confederacy unless the members of it were approximately on a level of political and industrial development. We are suffering at present from a proof of it in the position and power of the Rocky Mountain states, which are certainly as foreign to democracy as anything can possibly

be. To admit Senators from Cuba, whether they were natives or carpet-bag Americans, would be to prove that we had lost that political sense which has always characterized our people and which is our chief political reliance.

These instances go to show that the question of territorial extension is a question of expediency, and that it depends upon the occasion and upon the circumstances of the nation itself whether it is wise to extend territorial jurisdiction and responsibilities or not. In any case, those states only are prepared for colonization and foreign responsibilities whose internal cohesion is intense; for every extension of territory brings with it a strain upon the internal organism. If we had never taken Texas and northern Mexico, we never should have had any secession.

Let us now turn our attention back to the historical development for a few moments, in order to notice the effects of the independence from Europe which was won first by these North American colonies and afterwards by those of Spain.

In the disruption of the colonial system the position of the former Spanish colonies of South and Central America has been peculiar; they passed out of the domination of Spain, yet they have never won good standing as independent states in the family of nations. In the early twenties of this century, their status became an object of interest to Great Britain and the United States, and the relation of the United States to them became a subject of political contention here. The Panama Congress was an attempt to organize the states of the western continent under the hegemony of the United States for the purpose of declaring the independence of the western continent of European control. It was really a revolt against the old colonial system such as has been above described, and it might properly be regarded as the sequel to the revolt of the

thirteen North American colonies and a completion of the revolution which that revolt began in the relations between Europe and the outlying continents. The Panama Congress was, therefore, an act of political policy and, in that light, far more important than two vague dogmatic utterances in Monroe's message which attempted to formulate the view of those relations which the independent states of the New World had adopted in place of the old notion of Europe as the head and governor of the civilized nations of the whole globe.

If the Panama Congress had been carried out to a conclusive result, its effects might have been important. It became a matter of contest between parties here in one of the bitterest party fights in our political history — that between the Adams administration and the Jackson opposition. The confused and imperfect results left material for endless wrangling about interpretations of the Monroe doctrine. These interpretations are a mine of rhetorical wealth to the political dogmatizer. He can get out of it any great principle that he wants; and when a political dogmatizer gets a great principle, he is equipped for any logical necessity which he may encounter. He builds deduction on deduction, and if he finds that his foundation is after all too narrow for the needs of his argument, he can always go back to it and develop the fundamental principle, as he calls it, or tack on a logical deduction which he says was implicit in it. The history of theological doctrine and of all social and political principle-spinning shows what a facile and futile process this is. History contains instances enough to show us the frightful burden which a doctrine may be. It comes with the prestige of tradition, antiquity, and perhaps a great name, to take away from the living generation the right to do their own thinking and to compel them to sacrifice

their lives and happiness against their will and without the consent of their own reason and conscience.

In his message of December 17, 1895, President Cleveland referred to the balance-of-power doctrine as a parallel of the Monroe doctrine. The example was unfortunate if the parallel had been true. What oceans of blood and mountains of treasure have been spent for the balance-of-power doctrine! And what result is there to show for it all? We have had in our history many doctrines: America for the English; no taxation without representation; state rights; separation of purse and sword; manifest destiny; the self-expanding power of the Constitution; God's purpose to civilize the earth by African slavery; and I know not how many others. Some of them are obsolete or forgotten. Others it has cost us frightful sacrifices to set aside. Inasmuch as a United States Senator has referred to the doctrine of Washington's "Farewell Address," that we should avoid entangling alliances with foreign nations, as the "Washington fetish," I may perhaps be allowed to call the Monroe doctrine the "Monroe fetish." We should do best to declare our emancipation from all doctrines, to do our own thinking on all our own questions, and to act according to our own reason and conscience, not according to anybody's traditional formula. There is all the more reason for this because you will observe that the men who are trying to force us to do what they advocate, by shouting "Monroe" at us, all drop the Monroe doctrine as soon as their use of it is proved false in history and by the record — but they do not drop the plans they propose on that account. If, then, they do not abide by Monroe, but only use his name as a club with which to stun us, let us repudiate Monroe at the outset, so that we may stand on an even footing. If I were an educated young man now growing up, I would not

allow anybody to entail any formula on me that would fetter my judgment of questions and cases which may arise.

There is, however, a parallel to the Monroe doctrine which is far closer both in history and philosophy than the balance-of-power doctrine, and that is the colonial policy as it has been described in this paper. It has been shown how, historically and in obedience to the strongest forces which work upon the social and industrial organization, the opening-up of the outlying continents produced great movements of commerce and great redistributions of population. The colonial policy of the governments was an application of statecraft and diplomacy to the situation. The earth was drenched in blood through the eighteenth century in obedience to that policy. It has also been shown how the Monroe doctrine and the Panama Congress were parts of a grand movement which marked the definite end of the colonial policy as to America. So far, good; but now out of the end of that period springs up a source of new woe. The Monroe doctrine as often interpreted really amounts to a new doctrine that the globe is to be divided into two independent halves, the eastern and the western. This doctrine is to take the place of the doctrine that the globe is a unit ruled from and by Europe.

Is the new doctrine any better than the old one? Is it any more tenable? Is it not certain to take the place of the old one as the fetish for which our children must spend their blood and their property as our fathers did for the old colonial system? Is it anything but an affectation, a pose which cannot be maintained except for a time and for a purpose, to say that we will control this continent and refrain from meddling in the other? Does the United States intend to abstain from forming relations of all kinds with the nations of the eastern continents as her interests

and affairs may dictate? Have we not within a year been forced to protect our citizens in China and Armenia, and were we able to hold aloof from the war between China and Japan? Does the United States intend to deny that the states of South America are independent states open to access by any other nations and liable to have any kind of friendly or unfriendly relations with European states such as any two independent states may have with each other? Does the United States hold aloof from the present development of Africa, assuming that Americans will never engage in commerce there or never have interests there; or does the United States assume that, when civilized powers are in control, it will be possible for everyone to carry on trade and industry there with peace and security? It is evident that if the answers to these questions are given which a great many people in this country have recently seemed disposed to give, the new doctrine of dual division of the globe is to take the place of the colonial doctrine of European headship of the world, as the cause of strife, bloodshed, and waste to the whole human race.

We are already living under a régime created by manipulation of import duties, by which prices for all the great manufactured products are raised here from twenty-five to fifty per cent above the prices in other civilized countries. The ground alleged for this policy is that wages are high here. Undoubtedly they are higher here than in western Europe, at least for unskilled laborers; this situation is accounted for by the facts about the land-supply which I discussed in the beginning of this essay. It is now proposed to restrict immigration into this country, and the favorite reason alleged is to close our labor market and make wages high. Then there is another proposition earnestly advocated; that is, to cut this continent off from

the rest of the world and to give it a monetary system of its own. I say nothing now of the absurdity and impossibility of these propositions, in which respect no one of them is worse than either of the others, when examined by a student of political economy — they have a certain coherence and consistency in their error, although they are mutually destructive of each other. What I now desire to do is, by putting these things together and connecting them with the doctrine of political isolation of the western continent, to show the fallacy and absurdity, as well as the extravagance, of this whole set of notions. Try to imagine this western continent politically separated from intercourse with the rest of mankind; with commerce interdicted by taxes in order to produce industrial independence; with immigration forbidden in order to make and maintain a rate of wages here having no relation to the rate of wages elsewhere; and with an independent monetary system planned to make prices here independent of those in the rest of the world. You will see how preposterous such a program is, and what a satire it is on our boasted intelligence that we are forced to give it serious attention.

There is another view of the political organization of the globe which we had supposed to be already well on towards realization. It has been mentioned above. It is the view of the states of the globe as forming a great family of nations, united by a growing body of international law, creating institutions as they are needed to regulate international relations, bound together in community of interest by free commerce, communicating to one another the triumphs won by each in science and art, sharing their thoughts by a common literature in which the barriers of language are made as little effectual as possible, and thus creating one society of the enlightened

nations independent of state boundaries. Such an idea need only be expressed to show that it is the only conception of the relation of nations to each other which fits the enlightenment of our day. It is not in the least an ideal or a dream. It is only a construction of facts such as our international law already recognizes and rests upon. It does not preclude war between these nations, for nothing can preclude war; but it reduces the chances of it by extending the sway of reason and introducing into international relations ideas and institutions with which all enlightened nations are already familiar. Such a conception of international relations does not quench earth hunger. Nothing can quench that; for, as we have seen, it is the impulse which drives the human race to enter upon and enjoy its patrimony, the earth; but such a conception of the civilized races of the world in their relation to each other would bring into a clear light the difference between the extension of industry and commerce on the one side and political aggrandizement on the other. This distinction is no new thing; it is recognized and acted upon by all the most enlightened economists, publicists, and statesmen in the world. Neither is there anything new in the view of history and of the conflicts of policy which have here been presented; but if that view is true, then the Monroe doctrine, or the doctrine of the dual political organization of the nations of the earth, is a barbaric stumbling-block in the way of enlightened international policy.

The United States enjoys a privileged position such as no other community of men ever has occupied in the world's history. European statesmen live under a constant strain, day and night, to avoid war, while our statesmen can afford to trifle with the notion of war and to talk recklessly without danger of consequences. We have no

strong neighbors. We are under no obligation to maintain great armaments. We have no heavy debt. If we are heavily taxed, it is our own choice. No enemy will attack us. We can live in prosperity and enjoy our security if we choose. Our earth hunger is satisfied for the present, and we can enjoy its satisfaction. It is also provided for far into the future. Here, then, the propertyless classes can live in comfort and acquire property. Our government is also the only one which has ever been founded with provision, in its political theories and institutions, against political earth hunger. We may turn around in our folly, if we choose, and ask: "What is all this worth?" We may throw it away and run in chase of all the old baubles of glory, and vanity, and passion. If we do, we shall only add another to the long list of cases in which mankind has sacrificed the greatest blessings in pursuit of the greatest follies.

PURPOSES AND CONSEQUENCES

PURPOSES AND CONSEQUENCES[1]

The observation that motives and purposes have nothing to do with consequences is a criterion for distinguishing between the science of society and the views, whims, ideals, and fads which are current in regard to social matters, but especially for distinguishing between socialism and sociology. Motives and purposes are in the brain and heart of man. Consequences are in the world of fact. The former are infected by human ignorance, folly, self-deception, and passion; the latter are sequences of cause and effect dependent upon the nature of the forces at work. When, therefore, a man acts, he sets forces in motion, and the consequences are such as those forces produce under the conditions existing. They are entirely independent of any notion, will, wish, or intention in the mind of any man or men. Consequences are facts in the world of experience. If one man discharges a gun at another and kills him, he may say afterwards that he "did not know that it was loaded." He did not mean to kill. The consequences remain; they are such as follow from the structure of a gun, the nature of explosives, and the relative adjustment of the men and the things. Of course this proposition is so simple and obvious that no demonstration can add to it. Why is there any such thing as wisdom, unless there is a distinction between a correct and an incorrect apprehension of existing conditions and of the effects which certain forces will produce? How could anybody ever make a "mistake" if his purposes would determine the conse-

[1] For the approximate date of this essay, see the Preface.

quences of his acts? Why should we try to get experience of life and to know how to act under given circumstances, unless it is because the causes and effects will follow their own sequences and we, instead of controlling them by our mental operations, are sure to be affected by them in our interests and welfare? Why, in short, is there any need of education if things in this world will follow our motives and purposes — since education aims to inform us of the order of things in this world to which we are subject?

Since consequences are entirely independent of motives and purposes, ethics have no application to consequences. Ethics apply only to motives and purposes. This is why the whole fashion, which is now so popular and which most people think so noble, of mixing ethics into economics and politics, is utterly ignorant and mischievous. All policies are deliberate choices of series of acts; whether we wish good or ill, when we choose our acts, is of no importance. The only important thing is whether we know what the conditions are and what will be the effects of our acts. To act from notions, pious hopes, benevolent intentions, or ideals is sentimentalism, because the mental states and operations lack basis in truth and reality. Policies, therefore, which have not been tested by all the criteria which science provides are not to be discussed at all. Somebody's notion that they would work well and give us a gain, or that there is great need of them, because he thinks he sees a great evil at present, are no grounds of action for sober-minded men. The protective tariff is a case, so far as it is a policy of prosperity. The silver policy which was urged in 1896 and 1900 was another example. We live in the midst of a mass of illustrations of the fact that laws do not produce the consequences which the legislator intended. They give rise to other

consequences, such, namely, as the forces which they set in operation, under the conditions which exist, necessarily produce.

Acts of the legislature work on the cupidity, envy, and ambition of men; as soon as a law is passed each man affected by it takes his attitude to it. Mass phenomena result from the concurrent action of many. What results is what must result from the actions, acting as causes, under the conditions; if the actions are of a certain kind, institutions are undermined, men are miseducated, the public conscience is corrupted, false standards are set up; frivolity, idleness, love of pleasure, sycophancy, will become traits of the society. That the legislator intended to promote education, temperance, industry, and purity is entirely aside from the case. In 1899 the press of the United States constantly reiterated the assertion that the motives of the United States in the war with Spain were noble, humanitarian, and ethical, and that it never entered into expectation that the Philippine Islands were to come into our possession. All this was entirely idle; when a war is begun it will run its course and bring its consequences. What the intention was makes no difference. This, of course, is the reason why no serious statesman will enter upon a war if he can help it, or will ever engage in an adventurous policy, that is, a policy whose course and consequences are not open to his view so far as the utmost training and effort of human reason will enable him to see.

Whenever any policy is adopted, all the consequences of it must be accepted — those which are unwelcome as well as those which are welcome. This works both ways, for there are good consequences of an evil policy as well as bad consequences of a good policy. It is clear, however, that in the adoption of a policy the considerations which

should be taken into account are those which are deduced from the conditions existing and from the relations of cause and effect in the world of experience. They are not ethical at all, and the introduction of ethical notions or dogmas can never do anything but obscure the study of the facts and relations which alone should occupy attention.

The explanation of the popular confusion between motives and consequences is easy. We men are daily compelled to act. We cannot desist from activity. Therefore we have to make decisions and go forward. Hence, in our judgment of each other, if the acts turn out to have evil consequences, we have to grant excuse and indulgence to each other, if the intention was honest and the motive pure. It is no doubt necessary and right so to do, but that does not affect the reality of the consequences or the suffering and loss attendant upon them. Therefore we turn back to our educational operations, and to science, in order to learn more about the world of fact and the play of forces in it, for what we want is, not to judge or excuse each other, but to avoid suffering and loss.

Here, then, is the great gulf between all the sentimental, ethical, humanitarian, and benevolent views about social matters and the scientific view of the same. The former start out from some mental states or emotions produced by impressions from occurrences; the latter starts out from the desire to know the truth about facts and relations in the world of experience. In all the dictionaries definitions of socialism are given which try to express the sense of socialism in terms of the pious hope or benevolent intention by which socialists claim to be animated. All these definitions appear to be colored by a desire on the part of the persons who made them to give definitions

which would be satisfactory to socialists. The definitions are substantially alike. Not one of them contains an idea; that is to say, not one of them expresses a true definition, if by a definition is understood the expression in language of a single complete and well-rounded concept. An aspiration for better things is common to all philosophies and systems; it is not a definition of any one. It is a diffused sentiment and nothing more. These definitions, however, are all true to the reality of the case in one respect; they are all attempts to bring within the compass of a formula what is really a nebulous state of mind with respect to the phenomena of human society. The only positive characteristic of this state of mind is that it is one of disapproval and dislike. The suggestion of contrast with some other phenomena which would be approved and liked is, of course, a dispersion of thought to the infinite variety of subjective phantasms which might float in the imagination of an indefinite number of men. The point is, for the present purpose, that all this belongs on the side of motives, purposes, hopes, intentions, ideals, and has nothing to do with realities, forces, laws, consequences, facts, conditions, relations. The science of society finds its field in exploring the latter; it has nothing at all to do with the former. This is why it is true, although socialists are annoyed by the assertion, that socialism is not a subject for discussion by serious students of the science of society. An economist or sociologist who discusses socialism is like a physicist who discusses Jules Verne's novels. He does not prove his own breadth of mind; he proves that he does not understand the domain of his own vocation.

Poetry and other forms of the fine arts express sentiments, states of mind, and emotional reactions on experience. As new stimuli they affect the imagination

and produce new states of thought and emotion. For the greatest part their effect is dissipated and exhausted in these subjective experiences, not without residual effect on character. As motives of action, these impulses of the emotions produced by artistic devices do not stand in good repute in the experience of mankind. Why? Because they contain no knowledge or foresight, and therefore no guarantee of consequences. It belongs to education to train men and women to criticize and withstand impulses of this class. Pictures of scenes or objects, instead of inciting to action, ought to act upon an educated person as warnings to distrust the influence to which he is exposed. It is not possible to cross-examine a picture, even if it is a photograph.

A good education would, in a similar manner, teach its pupils to resist the magnetism of a crowd and the seductions of popularity. When a crowd, of which one is a member, are enthused with a common sentiment and purpose, it is impossible to resist the influence of it. Hence the well-known fact that men who act in a crowd often look back later in astonishment at their own actions; they cannot understand how they came to participate in the things which were done. Education ought to train us so that when we are in a crowd which is being swept away by a motive, we should refuse to join, and should instead go away to think over the probable consequences. In like manner popularity, which seems now to be the grand standard of action, is always to be distrusted. "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." That is the time to take warning that you are probably going astray. It is very smooth and easy to run with the current and it involves no responsibility for the consequences. Who then will consider the consequences? They will come. All our reason, study,

science, and education are turned to scorn and ridicule if popularity is a proper and adequate motive of action.

In fact the judgment of probable consequences is the only real and sound ground of action. It is because men have been ignorant of the probable consequences, or have disregarded them, that human history presents such a picture of the devastation and waste of human energy and of the wreck of human hopes. If there is any salvation for the human race from woe and misery it is in knowledge and in training to use knowledge. Every investigation of the world in which we live is an enlargement of our power to judge of probable consequences when cases arise in which we shall be compelled to act. The difference between motives and consequences, therefore, is seen to be a gulf between the most divergent notions of human life and of the way to deal with its problems. It is most essential that all of us who believe in the scientific view of life and its problems should extricate ourselves completely from the trammels of the sentimental view, and should understand the antagonism between them, for the sentimental view has prevailed in the past and we live now in a confusion between the two.

It is a still more positive vice to act from an intention to attain ideals. Ideals are necessarily phantasms. They have no basis in fact. Generally ideals are formed under the stress of difficulty along the hard road of positive endeavor. Then the imagination takes wing and, disregarding conditions and forces, revels in constructions which are not limited by anything.[1] The ideal for mankind would be to have material supplies without limit and without labor and to reproduce without care or responsibility. Minor ideals are but details or fractions which are not worth attention. If ideals have any power or

[1] Gumplowicz, L., Staatsidee, p. 133; Soziologie und Politik, p. 110.

value, it is as easy to use them for the whole as for any part. Dogmatic ideals like perfect liberty, justice, or equality, especially if economic and not political liberty, justice, and equality are meant, can never furnish rational or scientific motives of action or starting-points for rational effort. They never can enter into scientific thinking since they admit of no analysis and can be tested by no canons of truth. They have no footing in reality. Anybody who says that "we want to build a republic of educated labor" is not defining a rational program of action. He is only manufacturing turgid phrases. He who says that the state "ought to balance the motives of interest and benevolence" is not contributing to any sober discussion. He is talking nonsense, since an analysis of "state," "interest," and "benevolence" would cause the proposition to fall into contradictions and absurdities. The vice and fallacy of this way of looking at things is that it assumes that men can by thinking things call them into being; or that men can add by thinking to the existing conditions some element which is not in them.[1] All who talk about the "power of ideas" are more or less under this fallacy. It is a relic of the sympathetic magic of savage men. Serious study of human society shows us that we can never do anything but use and develop the opportunities which are offered to us by the conditions and conjunctures of the moment.

Other motives of action are derived from the authoritative or dogmatic precepts of some sect of philosophy or religion. These are what is commonly called ethics. In the ordinary course of life it is best and is necessary that for most of us, and for all of us most of the time, these current rules of action which are traditional and

[1] Ratzenhofer, G., Die Soziologische Erkenntnis, p. 365.

accepted in our society should be adopted and obeyed. This is true, however, only because it is impossible for nearly all of us to investigate for ourselves and win personal convictions, and it is impossible for any of us to do so except in a few special matters. Nevertheless, all this sets out only in so much clearer light the pre-eminent value of science, because science extends, over the whole domain of human experience, a gradually wider and wider perception of those relations of man to earth and man to man on which human welfare depends. Science is investigation of facts by sound methods, and deduction of inferences by sound processes. The further it goes the more it enlightens us as to consequences which must ensue if acts are executed by which things and men are brought into the relations which science has elucidated. At the present moment civilized society stands at a point in the development of the applications of science to human interests, at which the thing of the highest importance is the subjection of societal phenomena to scientific investigation, together with the elimination of metaphysics from this entire domain.

RIGHTS

RIGHTS [1]

The notion that there are such things as "natural" rights is due to the fact that rights originate in the mores, and may remain there long before they can be formulated (because it requires some mental development to be able to formulate them) in philosophical propositions, or in laws. The notion of "natural" rights is the notion that rights have independent authority in absolute right, so that they are not relative or contingent, but absolute.

The interests of men always clash in the competition of life. It is inevitable, on account of the organization of society, that this should be so. Even in the lowest form of the division of labor, that between the sexes, independent interests clash in the distribution of the products. The man there carries his point, if necessary, with the help of the other men, and a precedent is established by force, which through subsequent repetition becomes a law, and carries in itself a definition of rights between men and women.

The question of right or rights can arise only in the in-group.[2] All questions with outsiders are settled by war. It is meritorious to rob outsiders of property or women, or to invade any of their interests; it is meritorious also to repel and punish any efforts of theirs to invade the interests of one's group-comrades. War with group-comrades is "wrong," because it lessens the power of the in-group for war with outsiders. Here, then, is

[1] For approximate date, see Preface.
[2] Sumner, W. G., Folkways, §§15 ff.

where other devices must be invented. Chiefs and medicine-men imposed decisions which were laws by precedent; they were inculcated by ritual; sanctioned after a few generations by the ghosts of ancestors; enforced by all members of the in-group. The right thing to do was to obey the tradition or "law." Obedience was duty. The notion of societal welfare was taught by the tradition, for the usage of ancestors admitted of no doubt as true and right. Thus law, order, peace, duty, and rights were all born in the in-group at the same time, and they are all implicit in the interest of war-power. The rights were most deeply implicit, and it took the longest time to draw them forth. They came out in proverbs, maxims, and myths — as rules of action in classes of cases, as dicta of the gods, in whose name the shamans spoke. The usual form of a law was a taboo — "thou shalt not." The reason or motive of the taboo needed not to be understood; it was mystic and ritual, because it came from ancestors and was sanctioned by them. There was no reflection on it, for it was authoritative. It was the most imperative form of the mores, because the whole society would enforce it with the highest sanctions. There was no discussion about it; the rule was: obey or perish.

The earliest taboos probably were about religious rites and duties. In any primitive code the things forbidden range from things of primary and unlimited importance to trivial matters of ritual; in the ten commandments in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, the second, third, and fourth concern matters of little social importance compared with the last five. When taboos are analyzed, and their spirit is developed in a positive form, we get a proposition in the doctrine of rights. For instance, the taboo in the sixth commandment is on murder. The

right of the murdered man to live is a positive proposition, capable of some ethical discussion and elaboration, but not capable of enactment in the form of a statute. The right to property is a positive proposition implicit in the prohibition of stealing, but no legislature could enact the right of property in a modern statute. It follows that the "rights" are philosophical propositions implicit in the taboos, and to the modern way of thinking, they seem to be assumed in them; but they were never formulated or thought by anybody before the taboo was started. Hence the modern philosophers invented the notion of "natural" rights to bring in the jural notions in advance of the law. In the American Declaration of Independence, the first paragraph is made up of propositions in political philosophy to serve as a basis of right for the secession of the colonies from the British Empire; they might all be admitted and yet not justify the secession. The Southerners clung to the dogmas and were led by them to believe that secession could be proved in debate, or deduced rationally in logic, but it is entirely impossible to establish rationally a right of revolution; it would be establishing a state on the prime doctrine of anarchy. So it seems that the notions of rights, which are logically antecedent to laws, never can be put into laws. They must remain in the mores, and may be discussed in philosophy, but can be reduced to formulas not at all, or only very imperfectly.

In our times, the phraseology of rights is so current in the mores and in political discussion, that almost every proposition drops into that form. Every civilized state now contains groups who are recalcitrant and protesting, expressing their pain in terms of violated rights. They were the weaker parties in some collision of interests. There had to be a decision at last because life must go

on; and the decision was enforced by the society. This was a use of force, just as men settled disputes with women by force. All the great fabric of what we now prize so highly and justly as rights, has come out of such acts of force against some defeated parties; the only difference is that, in thousands of years, the dictates of law and the adjustment of interests have been modified and revised by better views of life. Rights have come to be expressions of the rules of the game in the competition of life. The in-group has become stronger, especially in the higher civilization, as the contentment and satisfaction of all members have become greater. This has depended very much on the economic power of members of the group. If they could work and earn, save and enjoy in security, they have not cared to dispute about rights; but if the struggle for existence has been hard, they have been apt to think that a readjustment of the social conventions which governed the competition of life might be to their advantage. Hard times, therefore, have produced civil conflicts and re-definition of rights.

If in any state the civil power becomes weak, as in Turkey or Central America, rights become insecure, that is, non-existent. A man is heard declaiming and denouncing; he talks about his "rights" as if they floated in the atmosphere, and ought to come floating to him by a divine spirit in them, independently of all physical or conventional conditions. This is the modern mythology and political metaphysics which we have inherited from the eighteenth century. A defeated litigant comes out of the best court in the most civilized state, angry, denouncing injustice and violation of rights, and declaiming solemn "doctrines" of justice and liberty and, above all, of "rights." A legislative minority also propounds doctrines of rights in order to establish its case against votes;

and when it fails, it hugs its great principles of rights. The philosophers, publicists, reformers, and agitators always argue in terms of rights (especially natural rights); they become rebels, revolutionists, anarchists, dynamiters, in the name of rights, and, if they come to prison or the scaffold, they still declaim in terms of the same vocabulary. A criminal becomes a martyr if he can put his crime under some great generalization about rights. We have all been educated by the modern civil mores to think of rights as something metaphysical, above and behind laws and institutions, greater than they, and with some inherent power to transmute themselves out of oratory and resolutions into facts.

It is certainly far wiser to think of rights as rules of the game of social competition which are current now and here. They are not absolute. They are not antecedent to civilization. They are a product of civilization, or of the art of living as men have practised it and experimented on it, through the whole course of history. They must be enjoyed under existing circumstances, that is, subject to limitations of tradition, custom, and fact. To be real they must be recognized in laws and provided for by institutions, but a great many of them, being inchoate, unsettled, partial, and limited, are still in the mores, and therefore vague and in need of further study and completion by courts and legislatures. This further work will be largely guided by the mores as to cognate matters, and by the conceptions of right and social welfare which the mores produce.

EQUALITY

EQUALITY [1]

The thirst for equality is a characteristic of modern mores. In the Middle Ages inequality was postulated in all social doctrines and institutions. There were some "prophets" who arose to talk of equality in the way of poetry, and some popular leaders who used the notion in popular revolts, but they were rebels and heretics, and they preached to deaf ears. The church also, which never failed to have a prescription for every human taste or appetite, had its construction of equality. Ecclesiastics and inquisitors treated all men as equal before the church, sometimes with great effect, when an unpopular king or prince was also a heretic. The doctrine of equality flattered ecclesiastical vanity.

Modern notions of equality are no doubt to be explained historically as revolts against mediæval inequality and status. Natural rights, human rights, equal rights, equality of all men, are phases of a notion which began far back in the Middle Ages, in obscure and neglected writings, or in the polemical utterances of sects and parties. They were counter-assertions against the existing system which assumed that rights were obtained from sovereigns, from which it resulted that each man had such rights as his ancestors and he had been able to get — with the further result that perhaps no two men had the same or equal rights. The case became different when, in the eighteenth century, the mediæval system was gone, the fighting value of the doctrine of equality was

[1] For approximate date, see Preface.

exhausted, and it was turned into a dogma of absolute validity and universal application.

The assertion that all men are equal is perhaps the purest falsehood in dogma that was ever put into human language; five minutes' observation of facts will show that men are unequal through a very wide range of variation. Men are not simple units; they are very complex; there is no such thing as a unit man. Therefore we cannot measure men. If we take any element of man and measure men for it, they always fall under a curve of probable error. When we say "man" for human being, we overlook distinctions of age and sex. Males of different ages are not equal; men and women are not equal in the struggle for existence. Women are handicapped by a function which causes disabilities in the struggle for existence, and this difference produces immense disparity in the sexes as to all interests through all human life.

The ground is then shifted to say that all men should be equal before the law, as an ideal of political institutions. They never have been so yet in any state; practically it seems impossible to realize such a state of things. It is an ideal. If this doctrine is a fighting doctrine, if it means that the law should create no privileges for one, or some, which others do not obtain under the same legal conditions, we should all take sides with it for the purposes of the fight. Even this, however, would remain an ideal, an object of hope and effort, not a truth.

When we come nearer to the real thing which men have in mind we find that they actually complain of inequality of fortune, of realization, of earthly lot, of luxury and comfort, of power and satisfaction. This is what they want and this craving is what is in the mores. Nearly all, when they say that they want equality, only use another form of expression to say that they want more

welfare than they have, because they take as a standard all which any one has and they find many who have more than themselves. In the nineteenth century, the eighteenth-century rhetoric about natural rights, equal rights, etc., gradually took on the form of a demand for the materialistic equality of enjoyment. Every change by which rhetorical phrases are set aside and real meaning is revealed is a gain. The fact of the mores of present-day society is that there is in them an intense craving for something which is a political phantasm. There is no reason whatever why it should be expected that men should enjoy equally, for that means that all should have means of enjoyment equal to the greatest which any one has; there is nothing in history, science, religion, or politics which could give warrant for such an expectation under any circumstances. We know of no force which could act for the satisfaction of human desires so as to make the satisfaction equal for a number of men, and we know of no interference by "the State," that is, by a committee of men, which could so modify the operation of natural forces as to produce that result. There is an old distinction between commutative and distributive justice which goes back to the Greeks, and which some writers of the nineteenth century have brought out again. Distributive justice is justice in which all personal circumstances are duly allowed for so that all are made "equal" on an absolute standard. Of course equality must necessarily be carried to some such conception at last. It is evident that God alone could give distributive justice; and we find, in this world in which we are, that God has not seen fit to provide for it at all.

THE FIRST STEPS TOWARD A MILLENNIUM

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[1888]

We are offered countless projects of social reform, the aim of which is to bring in the millennium. Let us see what the first condition of such projects must be, and whether we are prepared to fulfil it.

The student of social problems, who investigates them without preconceived or pet notions, finds again and again that he is brought, at the end of his analysis, face to face with this fact: it is a question of population. It is a question of marriage, of the reproduction of the species; of parental responsibility, competency, and duty; in short, of the family. In all the social speculations of the day, however, scarcely any attention is ever paid to this range of subjects. It is assumed that every one has a right to marry without responsibility to others, that society has no right to intervene, that children come into the world without any antecedents upon which reason and conscience could operate, that family life is sacred, even to the extent that parental folly, ignorance, and caprice must enjoy a prerogative of wasting or perverting the youth of children. Liberty, the rights of parents, and the whole non-interference theory, are here introduced when nothing has been heard of them before.

I maintain (1) that the part of our social code and social creed which wants re-examination and reconstruction is that which relates to marriage and the family; and (2) that, if there is to be any state regulation at all,

the place where it ought to begin is with marriage and the family.

What is the existing code and creed about marriage and the family?

It is held that if a man and woman want to marry, and if they are of the minimum age fixed by law, no one is warranted in interfering with them. The novels have sedulously taught that marriage should be founded only on love; that love is some emotional state or experience that is not subject to reason and conscience; indeed, that there is some ethical error in resisting it; and that it is the one human experience that is not subject to law or regulation. To judge from the tone of the newspapers about an elopement, or a marriage in defiance of the advice of parents, this kind of marriage has some merits over any other kind. Nobody is supposed to have any right to see to it that the parties to the marriage have compatibility of temper, or sufficient acquaintance with each other; and, above all, it is considered sordid and mean to raise the question whether they can support themselves and their children.

Nothing in the educational system is planned to inculcate high ideas of the momentous decision involved in uniting two lives, much less to make young people understand that parenthood is the most awful responsibility human beings ever accept. A false, or perhaps I might more justly say, an ill-defined, modesty causes the whole subject to be set aside. It is not easy to deal with it within convenient limits, yet to do it justice. Occasionally a bold preacher devotes a sermon to some phase of it, or a school-teacher of extraordinary conscientiousness and good judgment will exert a happy and successful influence on a small number of persons; but this is nothing compared with the mis-education from mawkish

novels, prurient newspaper stories, and current discussion of scandals, elopements, and divorces. Is it right that modesty should impose silence always on the right side only? Is it right that the current popular code should always go unchallenged?

We have broken to a considerable extent with the doctrine of the last century about the respective rights and duties of parents and children, which was based on the dictum that the parent is "the author of the child's being." The notion was that the parent had conferred such a blessing on the child is giving him existence that all the duties were on the side of the child, and all the rights on the side of the parent. Such a dictum with the deductions drawn from it cannot stand before a rationalizing generation. When once a child has reached an age to get a glimmering sense of what kind of a world this is, there are very few fathers who would dare to invoke this dictum as a ground of parental rights, and there are many who might find that the child would turn upon them with the most terrific accusation that could possibly be formulated: "You knew what kind of a world this is, and what kind of a man you were in it. You knew that you were a failure, or a drunkard, or a gambler, or a felon. How dared you beget me, and put me in the world to bear what you had entailed?"

I say that we have broken with this old-fashioned notion; but we have not yet, so far as I know, adopted any other consistent principle, and we shall not get the rights and duties on a sound basis until we accept the doctrine that the parents, having assumed the liberty and authority of marriage and parenthood, have all the responsibility, and all the duties, and that it is the child who has the rights. Parents, who have brought children into the world, are bound by all the deductions

that flow from the relationship that they have brought about, to sacrifice themselves that the children may have success in the struggle for existence.

Both morally and socially the doctrine here laid down is the one that underlies human welfare. There is no such penalty for error and folly as to see one's children suffer for it. There is no such reward for a well-spent life as to see one's children well-started in life owing to their parents' good health, good principles, fixed character, good breeding — in general, the whole outfit that enables men to fight the battle of life with success. Furthermore, we are not called upon to plot and plan for "the great interests of society," and all the other vague whims that are presented to us in high-sounding phrases. The great social interests solve themselves if every one simply attends to family duties, keeping himself clean and honest, and bringing up his children in virtue and good discipline. The reformers who are constantly dinning their social nostrums and state interference in our ears suppose that they are charged and commissioned to organize all the rest of us into "great social movements." In any sound study of the facts it will appear that the derived, wider, and more abstract interests are not to be pursued directly, that they never can be satisfied by direct effort, that they flow of themselves as consequences from right living in the household and in the individual career.

Let us go back now to our young couple. Having married for love and taken their liberty, they find that they were mistaken, and that there is an incompatibility of temper; instead, however, of bearing their own burden, and abiding by the duties that they have undertaken to each other and to their children, they now invoke the interference of the rest of society, by its laws and

civil institutions, to release them from the consequences of their own act. They find themselves constrained and dissatisfied. Liberty formerly meant that they must create relationships, if they wanted to do so, regardless of the interests of bystanders; liberty now means that they must be allowed to break the relationship, if they want to do so, regardless of the rights and interests that have grown out of their former act. If their children are in this way rendered homeless or parentless, then their neighbors, either through public or private charity, may assume the burden of caring for them.

If no such rupture of the marriage occurs, it may yet turn out that the parents are not capable of earning, or that they are extravagant and foolish in their expenditure, or that they are shiftless, idle, or vicious. Let us not here make the mistake of assuming that some of us are good and strong and others bad and weak, for that would be to misconceive the whole case. All of us are only more or less idle, vicious, and weak. We all have to fight the same temptations, and each one has enough to do to fight his own battle; that is just the reason why it is unjust and socially ruinous to reward one for having done his own duty, simply by making him go on to do other people's duty. If the idle and vicious stood by themselves as individuals, they could almost always be left to themselves. It is the children who make the problem great now, and who carry it into the future.

As we have seen above, the rights lie with the children and against the parents in the first instance. Now we see that the rights lie with the society against the parents, in the second instance, for it is society that will suffer from the failure of the parent to do the parent's duty, and it is society that will have to bear the burden that the parent has allowed to fall. Who, however, is

"society"? It can be only those other parents who have done a parent's duties, through unknown struggles and self-denial. It has very rarely been argued, so far as I know, that the state might fairly enforce against the parent his responsibility, or that it might separate his children from him, if it were obliged to assume his duties on account of his worthlessness. On the contrary, such a view of the matter is almost always met with an outcry against inhumanity. Perhaps such an outcry is just; but what I maintain is, that if we are not prepared to interfere in any way at all with freedom of marriage or the continuance of family life between two people who are not fit to be parents, then our plans of throwing all the consequences on the good parents is a policy by which society continually uses up its best members, while it preserves and stimulates the reproduction of its bad ones.

Let us go on with some details and see if this is not so.

The children, being here, must be educated. Plainly, it belongs to the parent to educate them. In contemplating marriage a man is just as much bound to look forward to the expense of educating as of feeding his children. If the state — that is, again, his neighbors — will have to educate his children for him, one important link in the chain of moral responsibility that is essential to the moral order of society is broken. I know of no provision at all for bringing home to parents the duty of educating their children, or the value of education to their children; on the contrary, all the existing arrangements offer education as a thing to be taken or left by those for whom it is intended. Compulsory attendance is making some advance; but here again, where liberty has no application, we are met with an outcry in favor of

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liberty so much contemned everywhere else. For how fares it with the liberty of the parents who have done their duty? They must pay for the school. They are told how essential schools are to make good citizens, how much better it is to pay for schools than for jails, and so on. But, if the tax-payer has any rights, why is it not one of the first of them, after he has provided schools, under the view of the matter just rehearsed, that he should know that those for whom the schools are provided are taking the good of them, and that the commonwealth will have the advantages for which he is paying?

Instead of being guaranteed of this fact, he is met by a new demand that he shall provide text-books and stationery. In order to make an argument for schools supported by taxation, it has been said that schools "support republican institutions," "save jails," etc., etc. If that is true, schools exist for the good of the community and not for the purpose of fitting the children to fulfil their careers on earth. Then the schools are not a good to be struggled for and paid for by those who get the good of them, but the children go to school in order to subject themselves to the discipline that the good of the community imposes upon them. In that view of the matter, it is consistent and reasonable, as well as quite in accord with human nature, that it should be constantly necessary to provide new inducements in order to secure attendance. It is said by those in a position to know that the children of Connecticut do not, on the average, take more than one-half of the schooling that the tax-payers provide for them all.

In the next stage, however, the tax-payer is called upon to pay inspectors and agents to seek out and force upon the children of his negligent neighbor the boon

that he has paid for, but which the neighbor cannot even appreciate. The inspector reports that the parent has taken the children from school at an early age, in order to put them at work for gain, that the more children he has the more he gets out of their wages for his own benefit, and that the children are exploited by their parents without any of a parent's feeling.

Next comes the "working-man." He demands that the children shall be peremptorily and absolutely forbidden to work, not in order that they may go to school, but that they may not compete with the working-man in the labor market. The parent forces the child to work for the parent's benefit, and the non-parent forces the child not to work for the benefit of the non-parent. In this contest, who defends the rights of the children? If anybody needs state protection evidently it is they, for they are being sacrificed between two selfish interests. The politician, however, asks only: Who has the most votes? and, finding that these are the non-parents, he eagerly passes a law to forbid the children to work, leaving all consequences to care for themselves.[1] The tax-payer is called upon to pay for some more inspectors to enforce this law. If the children by happy accident find their way to school, well and good; if they escape school, or are abroad and idle during half the year when school is not in session, they take to vagabondage and idleness with all its vices; for they are forbidden to work at all, as if work were in its nature a vice and not simply in its excess a harm.

The children are thus rapidly preparing as candidates for the reform school and the industrial school, once more at the expense of the tax-payer; or he is called

[1] See the report of the State Board of Education of Connecticut, 1886, on the Child Labor Law of that state.

upon to subscribe to voluntary charitable organizations, which aim to reform abandoned children.[1]

One of the latest novelties, now, in this same direction, is the complaint that the education which the burden-bearing part of the community has furnished for the whole is not of a good kind; that the gift is not a suitable one; that the beneficiaries of it are not much to blame for rejecting it, because it is not of the right kind. It is proposed that the tax-payer once more shall come forward and provide trade schools, or manual labor schools. This proposition is as yet so vague and multiform that it is impossible to discuss it. The most sensible persons who are interested in the plan agree that schools to teach handicrafts or trades as a means of livelihood would not be defensible; but may not the tax-payer think it rather hard that, after he has provided schools and libraries, and high schools with all the paraphernalia of science, he should be told that it is all a mistake, and that he has to begin all over again, on a new line of development, which the same guides now believe to be the correct one?

Now this generation of children, when they come to maturity, marry — the earlier the more dependent they are and the less serious their views of life — and begin the story of their own parents, and their own childhood, all over again. At middle life they find themselves overburdened, disappointed, unfit to cope with the difficulties of life, a discontented class that the respectable and burden-bearing part of society are once more told is a

[1] While writing, I find in a daily paper the report of a county home for abandoned children, in which it is said: "It will be noticed that one hundred and thirty-one of these [one hundred and forty-seven] children were taken from the degraded classes, even the homeless ones being homeless by reason of the viciousness of parents, one or both of whom, in all cases except eight of the one hundred and thirty-one, are living and are able-bodied."

problem for them to solve. One of the great dogmas is that all men are equal, but a man who has earned a loaf of bread and one who has not earned a loaf of bread find themselves unequal. Let the tax-payer look to himself, if he cannot solve that! The man who has spent all his money and the one who has not find themselves very unequal. According to the current philosophy, the blame for this is not with the man who wasted his youth and rejected his chances of education, nor with his father who failed of all his family and social duties, but with the respectable and dutiful citizen who provided the educational facilities for others and profited by them for himself.

If any of the negligent persons become guilty of crime, then at last the patient tax-payer might believe that the experiment was over, that his responsibility was discharged, that he had done all that he could possibly be asked to do for that person, and that the criminal now in prison would be forced to earn his own living and spend his time in sober industry. Not so, however. It is now the turn of the penologist, who demands that the prisons shall be managed so as to reform the criminals, and "without regard to pecuniary considerations." The "working-man" also, not knowing what he wants nor why he wants it, and plainly uninformed or deluded as to the facts and relations in question, but possessed of new political power which he is eager to exercise and for which he is not yet held to any due responsibility, demands that the labor of the convicts shall be stopped or wasted. The latter seem to think that a criminal becomes harmful when he goes to work, and the former that a prison is a kind of mill for washing so many criminals as may be caught, and thus operating an arithmetical diminution of the criminal class.

Here we have, then, a system in which the community is divided into responsible and irresponsible classes. Every duty discharged by the former serves only to lay the basis for a new duty to be imposed; every duty neglected by the latter serves only to lay the basis for a new privilege or exemption to be claimed. In this system nothing at all is done to prevent or lessen the propagation of the social disease, but, on the contrary, everything is done to nurse and develop it by cutting off such direct penalties as would, in the order of nature, be connected with the evil, and would react upon it to restrict it. All the palliatives are applied at the expense of those that have done as much as men ever do to crush and conquer the social disease in themselves and their children. Those, therefore, who would make good parents must delay marriage by as much as they must be prepared for all the extra burdens that the state will lay upon them as soon as they show that they mean to pay their way; and those who would make bad parents are set free to marry the earlier by as much as they are assured that the state will come to their assistance, in one way and another, so soon as they show that they do not mean to pay their way. We are therefore increasing evils and deteriorating our society.

If now we should reverse our policy, two courses would be open to us. We could either limit all our active measures to securing, as far as possible, those who will conform to the rules of right living, against any harm from those who refuse to learn how we must all conduct ourselves in order that we may all prosper, leaving the latter to the stern school of experience; or, we could bring restrictions to bear on marriage and family life. At least it is evident that, if we are going to bring interference to bear, in the hope of dealing with social evils, our

interference will never be effective until it touches marriage and the family. The objective point can be defined. Measures which bear upon it will not be constructive,[1] but direct, if we are prepared to make them; if we are not prepared to make them, let us at least desist from those measures that only use up our best social elements. It is astonishing how invariably thorough study of social phenomena brings out the fact that social devices produce the very opposite results from those that were aimed at. The social reforms of the last fifty years have very largely consisted in converting other social ills into taxation; but taxation is a most potent cause of social ills; when, therefore, the circle shall have been completed, how much shall we have gained?

One of the favorite phrases of those who seek a formula under which to introduce their devices is that the state should take any measures that will "make better men." A state can never make men of any kind; a state consumes men. New-born children are not soldiers, or taxpayers, or laborers. Years of cost of production must be spent upon them before they can be any of these contributors to society. It is the work of

[1] The town of New Haven, being about to build a new alms-house, a petition is presented to the selectmen, in which the petitioners "do hereby protest against any parties or firms being allowed to compete for the contract to erect said buildings, who refuse to accede to the request for shorter hours of labor and just compensation, but who do insist on more hours and less wages, which we claim is injurious and detrimental to the best interests of every community, and as it cannot be denied that low wages, and long hours of toil tend to discouragement, which leads to idleness, and which is one of the great causes of poverty and crime, and produces in every community that class that becomes a tax and a burden, and necessitates, as in the present case, the erection of buildings for their care and support at the public expense, etc." This tortuous and involved series of dogmatic generalizations is hardly a caricature of the kind of argumentation which is brought forward in educated circles whenever a measure of social policy is under discussion.

the family, the church, the school, and other educational institutions to bring them up and make them as good men as possible, and then turn them over to the state as citizens. The state, therefore, does not make them; it uses them up; it does not produce, it costs. The lives of generations are spent to maintain it, and carry it on. The utmost that the state can do is to satisfy the purposes of its existence for these generations in return for what they have spent on it. The soldiers whom the state uses up never come to life again. The taxes which are paid to it never come back again. If the home institutions produce better men, and they put better efforts into the state (as they doubtless will), then they can get out of the state a better fulfilment of state functions; but every device for trying to get out of the state anything more than is put into it has no other effect than to make the state cost more.

LIBERTY

1887–1889

WHAT IS CIVIL LIBERTY?

[1889]

It might seem that liberty was one of the most trite and worn of all subjects. It will be the aim of this essay to show that liberty is the least well analyzed of all the important social conceptions, that it is the thing at stake in the most important current controversies, and that it needs to be defended as much against those who abuse it as against those who deride it.

In the first place, I put together some citations which will, I think, justify me in bringing this subject forward again.

1. Rodbertus is the one of the recent socialists with whom it is best worth while to deal, for he is the master of them all. He is also best understood in his writings on Roman taxation, in which his historical text and his social dogmas throw important light on each other. He defines liberty to be a share in the power of the state.[1] He then defines "free trade," in the following pages, so as to make it cover all civil liberty, according to Anglo-American institutions, and attributes to free trade, in this sense, no less harm than the destruction of civilization. It is amusing to notice how this denunciation of free trade, which it would have been so satisfactory for the opponents of free trade to quote, has been fenced off and marked with the strongest kind of a danger-signal, so that it is never quoted at all, because it is an assault

[1] Hildebrand's "Jahrbücher," V, 269.

on all modern liberalism as broad as the Pope's "Encyclical" of 1864. In fact, this parallelism must be noted more than incidentally, for it helps to show what I here have in view: that all forms of liberty are *solidaire* with each other; and all forms of assault on liberty, as well the revolutionist and socialistic as the extreme reactionary, are also *solidaire* with each other. A criticism of Rodbertus is a task which I reserve for another occasion, but, as germane to my present subject and as illustrating the sort of dogma which shows the need of re-analyzing liberty, I ask attention to the following proposition: "Moral freedom is conditioned on historical necessity." Some of our contemporaries take that sort of proposition as the profoundest wisdom. To me it is oracular in more senses than one.[1]

2. From a large collection of similar cases I select the following: "Life appears to the Manchester party to run its course under the form of a parliamentary debate, and not otherwise. An assertion is followed by an objection, this by a rejoinder, and so on. The decision of the majority is final." The view here stigmatized is held by all those who believe in government by deliberation: "The great affair in this world is, not to convince a man's intelligence, or to increase his knowledge, but it is at least equally important to lead his will and to *conquer* it." [2] The writer goes on to argue that, if men are allowed to act freely, they will not act by deliberation, but selfishly. There he leaves the matter, apparently believing that he has routed the "Manchester Schule," and established something of philosophical or practical importance. He must, of course, assume that he and his friends are to decide when others and their friends

[1] Hildebrand's "Jahrbücher," VIII, 420, note.

[2] Von Eichen in "Preuss. Jahrbücher," 1878, p. 382.

are acting selfishly, and ought to have their wills conquered.

3. To take another citation from a popular writer: "Not one liberal principle but is admirable in the abstract; yet not one liberal measure that has not worked terrible mischief in our time. The liberty of thought, for instance; who dare gainsay it? Yet it has proved destructive of the principle of religion, without which there is less cohesion among men than among a herd of swine. The liberty of settlement and circulation has given rise to the pestilence of large towns, in which men congregate and live together on terms worse than a pack of wolves. The liberty of industry has reduced four-fifths of the population to a state of serfdom more cruel than negro slavery, while more than half of the remaining population is engaged in a perpetual struggle, more savage than the intermittent warfare of cannibals. Free trade among nations has ruined, first individually, then industrially, then financially, and finally politically, prosperous countries, such as Turkey, while in England it has destroyed, not only agriculture, but all those sterling qualities which formerly characterized British industry and trade. . . . Parallel to the deception experienced by the modern world through the progress of industry, aided by discovery and invention, have come down on this generation the fatal effects sprung from the spread of education. While thoughtless or superficial writers pretend to find in education the remedy of all social evils, as a matter of fact education has become the source of a vast amount of human suffering in modern times, under which those whose education is their only patrimony or source of income suffer most." [1] This is suffi-

[1] Karoly, "The Dilemmas of Labor and Education," London, 1884, Introd., p. x.

ciently explicit, and also manifests the solidarity of all forms of liberty and modern civilization. Those who attack them all show that they appreciate the truth of things a great deal better than those who try to attack some and save others.

4. Then there are the philosophers of the newest school, who, seizing upon the plain fact that all liberty is subject to moral restraints, as we shall presently see, are forcing upon us, or trying to force upon us, by legislation, restraints on liberty derived from altruistic dogmas, and, in general, under the high-sounding name of ethics, are assuming a charter for interference wherever they choose to allege that they have moral grounds for believing that things ought to be as they want them.

5. Finally, the anarchists, taking liberty to mean that a man ought to be a law unto himself, and that there should be no other law, have shown from another side that we should try to find out what liberty is.

The History of the Dogma of Natural Liberty

The history of the dogma of the natural liberty of all men, with the cognate dogma of the natural equality of all men, would be an important topic for exhaustive treatment by itself. From the notes which I have made on the subject I condense as far as possible the following view of it.

Slavery in the classical states seems to have rested upon the law of war, that the vanquished man with his family and all his property fell under the good pleasure of the conqueror. Xenophon states this law explicitly: "The law is well known among all men that, when a state goes to war, the property and bodies of all in the state are the property of the captors. You will, therefore, not pos-

sess wrongfully whatever you get, but, if you permit them to retain anything, it will be out of humanity." [1] It seems that the reason why slaves in antiquity so universally accepted their fate was that they understood that such was the fortune of war. They acquiesced in it as according to the rules of the game. The earliest writer whom I have found who utters the dogma of liberty is Philemon (about 350 B.C.): "No one by nature ever was born a slave, but ill-fortune enslaved the body." [2] Aristotle discusses the subject in the third and fourth chapters of the first book of the "Politics." He says that some held that slavery was against nature. Such persons, whoever they were, must have derived their opinions entirely from humane impulse and poetic enthusiasm; Aristotle was not of that tone of mind. He could not find in history any example of a state which had not slavery, and when he examined the state in which he lived he easily saw that slavery was of its very essence; he therefore held that slavery was a natural necessity. Such it was in the sense that it was rooted in the nature of the classical state; it is undeniable that the classical state could not have grown up and could not have produced its form of civilization without slavery. It must also be recognized as a fact that no other organization of society has yet shown itself capable of that degree of expansion which the Roman state developed by means of slavery. The mediæval state broke down under the first expansive requirement which was made upon it. Whether the modern state, based on natural agents and machinery, is capable of expansion or not, is yet to be proved. There seems to be ample reason to believe that it is, unless the modern world votes not to go on;

[1] "Kyroped.," vii, 5, 73. Cf. "Memorab.," ii, 2, 2, and Polybius, ii, 58, 9.
[2] Frag. 39 in Meineke, "Com. Graec.," iv, S. 47.

but, if the modern world votes to go on and not be afraid, it can only do so by virtue of education, and then it is subject to the remonstrance of Mr. Karoly at the head of this article, and of others who think with him. To return to the classical state: it remains only to observe that slavery was likewise the fate of that state which, having enabled it to grow up to immense power and achievement, also inevitably carried it down to ruin and disgrace.

It is free to us all to speculate on the question whether every force which makes high expansion possible will not also bring with it its own form of inevitable destruction or decay. Aristotle, however, proceeding upon the historical method and upon observation, found that slavery was necessary and expedient within the limits of the age and the form of society he was discussing.

Fuller expression of the dogma of natural liberty comes only with the Christian era. Dio Chrysostom, at the end of the first century, expresses himself in favor of it, but his declaration is incidental and can be taken only as rhetorical.[1] It is among the Christian writers that it first finds distinct and enthusiastic expression. With them it is rather an inference from fundamental doctrines of the faith than an actual article of the creed, although they quote texts freely in support of it. The doctrines of Christianity are undoubtedly favorable to it, and the inference was direct and easy. Tertullian (about 200 A.D.), addressing heathen, declares: "We are your brothers by the right of one mother — Nature." [2]

It was not confined to Christians, however; it is very probable that it may have entered into the Stoic philosophy in some vague way. We find it in the lawyers of the third century. Ulpian says: "In civil law, slaves

[1] "Orat.," vii, 138.

[2] "Apologet. ad Gent.," c. 39.

are considered null. Not, however, by natural right; because, as regards natural right, all men are equal." [1] And Florentinus: "Liberty is the natural faculty of that which it is permitted to any one to do, unless something has been prohibited to him by force or law. Slavery is an institution of the law of nations, by which any one is subjected to the rule of another, against nature. *Servi* are so called because military commanders are wont to sell captives, and so to preserve (*servare*) them and not kill them." [2] The doctrine, therefore, gets into the Institutes of Justinian: [3] "Slavery is the institute of the law of nations by which a human being is subjected to another's control against nature." These propositions in the law, remained, however, entirely barren, and were not different from the academical utterances of the philosophers. It was the voice of reason and conscience recognizing a grand abstract doctrine, but without power to solve the social problems which would arise if that doctrine should be in any measure admitted into the existing order. The Christians alone seem to carry on the doctrine as something more than a pious hope, something not more distant than any other feature of the kingdom of heaven, and easily realizable in that kingdom. The vague elements of social and political innovation in the revolt of the Donatists and the Bagaudes bear witness to the extent to which some such doctrines had been popularized. The latter had a very naïve definition of natural rights, and, on the whole, as good a one as has ever been given. "Natural rights are born with us, *about which nothing is said.*" [4]

[1] "Digest," i, 17, 32. [2] "Digest," v, 4. [3] I, tit. iii, 2.

[4] See Jung, in Sybel's "Zeitschrift," xlii, 65. He gives no authority for the definition of natural rights. Another topic which might be investigated with great advantage to social science is the history of popular revolts, with especial attention to their common elements of political and social dogma.

By the seventh century, the churchmen had made the doctrine of natural liberty one of the tenets of the Church. Gregory the Great writes: "Since our Redeemer, Creator of all creatures, deigned to put on human form, in order by His divine grace to break the bonds of the servitude by which we were held as captives, that He might restore us to our ancient liberty, it is fitting and advantageous that those whom Nature has made free, and whom the law of nations has made subject to the yoke of servitude, should be restored, by enfranchisement, to that liberty in which they were born." [1] This passage became authoritative for the Middle Ages, as well for the point of view of the doctrine and the sanction of it, as for its substance. It is a familiar fact that the current reason then alleged for enfranchisements was one's soul's health in the realization of a high Christian ideal. About 825 Bishop Jonas, of Orleans, asks: "Why are not master and slave, rich and poor, equal by nature, since they have one Lord in heaven, who is not a respecter of persons? . . . The powerful and rich, taught by these (church fathers), recognize their slaves and the poor as equal to themselves by nature." [2] In the twelfth century Bishop Ivo writes: "If we consult the institutes of God, and the law of nature, in which there is neither bond nor free," etc.[3] In the thirteenth century the doctrine appears in Bracton.[4] When describing the classes of men as free, villains, serfs, etc., he says: "Before God, there is no acceptance of men as free, or of men as slaves." Here we see the doctrine, such as the churchmen had been elaborating it, with its scriptural warrant, pass into the English common law.

[1] Epistles, book vi, ep. 12; 77 Migne, 803.
[2] "De Instit. Laic.," ii, 22; 106 Migne, 213. He quotes Coloss. iv, 1.
[3] Epist. 221; 162 Migne, 226. [4] Book i, ch. 8, ed. Twiss, 1878.

In the fourteenth century the kings of France, in enfranchising the communes on the domains, repeatedly allege this doctrine as one of their motives.[1] Undoubtedly, the real motive was that more revenue could be got from them by taxing them as communes than by exacting feudal dues from the members as serfs, but it all helped to spread the doctrine as an idea of what would be "right."

This review now shows that the doctrine of liberty and equality by "nature," by birth, and by natural right was not by any means an eighteenth-century dogma. It had been growing and spreading for eighteen hundred years. It had begun in skepticism about the fairness of slavery; it could not begin with anything else. It went on until it became a philosophical notion of liberty, meaning the natural right of every one to pursue happiness in his own way, and according to his own ideal of it; it could not stop short of that.

This dogma did not emancipate slaves or serfs. During a thousand years, from the sixth to the sixteenth century, the peasants of France and England passed through the stages of slavery, serfdom, villainage, and compulsory settlement,[2] by persistent struggles of their

[1] The originals of these documents are not accessible to me. One of Philippe le Bel is quoted: "Seeing that every creature who is formed in the image of our Lord ought, in general, to be free by natural right," etc.; and one by Louis le Hutin: "Seeing that, by the right of nature, each one ought to be born free," etc.

[2] In September, 1860, the correspondent of the "Augsbürger Allgemeine Zeitung" wrote from New York that the correct solution of the American slavery question would be to determine upon five steps: 1, forbid separation of negro families; 2, bind the slaves to the soil; 3, change them into serfs; 4, change serfdom to villainage; 5, abolish the last. (Quoted by Rodbertus, with approval, in Hildebrand's "Jahrbücher," II, 266.) This is as refined and beautiful an application of the "teachings of history" as could possibly have been made to that case, yet it requires very little knowledge of the case as it

own, aided by economic improvements and political vicissitudes, but the dogma of natural rights was aiding them all the time, by undermining the institutions of the law, and by destroying the confidence of the ruling classes, so far as they were religious and humane, in the justice of the actual situation.

And so the most important fact in regard to the history of the dogma of natural liberty is that that dogma has never had an historical foundation, but is the purest example that could be brought forward of an out-and-out *a priori* dogma; that this dogma, among the most favored nations, helped and sustained the emancipation of the masses; and that, by contagion, it has, in the nineteenth century, spread liberty to the uttermost parts of the earth. At no time during this movement could anybody, by looking backward to history, have found any warrant for the next step to be made in advance; on the contrary, he would have found only warning not to do anything. Such must always be the effect of any appeal to history, as to what we ought to do or as to what ought to be. It is a strange situation in which we find ourselves, when those of us who are most unfriendly to "metaphysics" and have most enthusiastic devotion to history, find ourselves compelled to remonstrate against half-educated denial of what speculative philosophy has done and may do for mankind, and also to remonstrate against the cant of an historical method which makes both history and method ridiculous. In the crisis of a modern discussion to go off and begin to talk about history is the last and best advice of reaction and obscurantism.

Let it be noticed also that from our present standpoint

really stood to see that this program was as unpractical and pedantic as the wildest proposition which could have been made by an *a priori* philosopher.

this doctrine has lost nearly all the arguments which were ever brought to its support. The notion of natural rights is not now held by anybody in the sense of reference to some original historical state of the human race. The biblical scholars would scarcely avow the exegesis by which the doctrine was got out of the Scriptures; the dogma to-day does not stand on the ground of an inference from any religious doctrine. The doctrine of evolution, instead of supporting the natural equality of all men, would give a demonstration of their inequality; and the doctrine of the struggle for existence would divorce liberty and equality as incompatible with each other. The doctrine, thus stripped of all the props which have been brought to its support, would remain only a poetic inspiration; but, if all this is admitted, if its historic legitimacy is all taken away, does that detract anything from the beneficence of the doctrine in history, render invalid a single institution which rests upon it now? Shall we any of us return into serfdom, because it is proved that our ancestors were emancipated under a delusion or a superstition?

On the other hand, it is when we turn to the present and the future that the rectification of the dogma becomes all-important. The anarchists of to-day have pushed the old dogma of natural liberty to the extremest form of abstract deduction, and they propose to make it a program of action. They therefore make of it a principle of endless revolution. If, however, the basis on which it once rested is gone, it is impossible that we should hold and use it any more. With our present knowledge of history, we know that no men on earth ever have had liberty in the sense of unrestrainedness of action. The very conception is elusive; it is impossible to reduce it to such form that it could be verified,

for the reason that it is non-human, non-earthly; it never could exist on this earth and among these men. The notion of liberty, and of the things to which it pertains, has changed, even in modern history, from age to age. Never in the history of the world has military service weighed on large bodies of men as it does now on the men of the European continent. It is doubtful if it would ever have been endured; yet the present victims of it do not appear to consider it inconsistent with liberty. Sumptuary laws about dress would raise a riot in any American state; a prohibitory law would have raised a riot among people who did not directly resist sumptuary laws. A civil officer in France, before the Revolution, who had bought or inherited his office, had a degree of independence and liberty in it which the nineteenth-century official never dreams of; the more this nineteenth-century civil and political liberty is perfected, the more it appears, on the contrary, that under it an official has freedom of opinion and independence of action only at the peril of his livelihood.

So far our task has been comparatively easy. It requires only industry to follow out the history of what men have thought about anything. To find out how things have actually taken place in the life of the human race is a task which can never be more than approximately performed, in spite of all our talk about history. To interpret the history is still another task, of a much more difficult character.[1]

[1] The Emperor Paul, of Russia, showed what may be done in the interpretation of history. When he heard of the excesses of the French Revolution, he turned to his sons and said, "Now you see that it is necessary to treat men like dogs." (Masson, "Mémoires sur la Russie," 219). It is true that he was crazy, but we all have our personal limitations, which are most important when we undertake interpretation.

Liberty in History and Institutions

We are blinded by the common use of language to the fact that all social actions are attended by reactions. To take the commonest and often noticed instance, we talk of buyers and sellers as if they were independent of each other; we call those who have money buyers, and those who have goods sellers. We find, however, that no transaction can be correctly understood until we regard it as an exchange, having two parts, an action and a reaction, equal and opposite. In the language of the market, also, we speak of being long or short of the market, but every one who has either money or goods is in the market, and is both long and short of it all the time. He is either long of goods and short of money, or long of money and short of goods. The philosophy of the market cannot be understood unless we study it from this point of view.

The fallacy of a great many doctrines in social science, and the philosophy of a great many errors in social policy, is that they divorce the action from the reaction. If there is not a reaction with equivalence and equilibrium, then there is an expenditure from one side toward the other, a drain of force from one side and an accumulation of it at another, until there come a crisis and a redistribution. When the return and equivalence are suspended, there is a necessary continuance of the movement, in the tendency toward a stable equilibrium of another kind, which would come about when all the force had been transferred. For instance, you give good schools for less than their market value; you must, then, give free schools; then you must give free books and stationery; then "hot breakfasts," [1] and so on in succession.

[1] "The Economist," 1889, p. 430.

The fact that one thing has been given is made an argument for more. You are told: You have established free schools; "why should not you" do whatever else the proponent favors? The argument that because you have given a man one thing you ought to give him another is not good in logic, but it is intensely strong in human nature and in history. The saying is attributed to Danton, the revolutionist: "The revolution came, and I and all those like me plunged into it. The *ancien régime* had given us a good education without opening an outlet for our talents." The great fallacy of socialistic schemes is that they break off the social reaction. A man is to have something simply because he is a man — that is, simply because he is here. He is not to be called upon to render any return for it, except to stay. On the other hand, the tax-payer, who has provided all there is, is not on that account to be entitled to a recompense of any kind. He has only incurred a new liability, *viz.*, to do the next thing which is demanded of him. The only stable equilibrium under this system would be universal contentment. But bounty does not lead to contentment, and cannot, until the recipient has everything for nothing. The movement, therefore, runs to a crisis, a redistribution, a recommencement, and the further it goes, the nearer it approaches anarchy, impoverishment, and barbarism.

At various times, in primitive society, in ancient Egypt, and in the Roman Empire, when women have possessed the forces which were efficient in the society, they have had dominion over men. They abused the power when they had it, too. At other times the subjection of women has been due to the fact that they needed protection; they did not possess the forces which, at the time, were required for self-defense in the society. But

since they accepted protection, they could not be free; when they fell into dependence, they could not be independent. If they could claim protection and at the same time dominion, they would be privileged; and any one who enjoys privilege which some one else has to furnish, is of course superior. Hence, there are three positions only in social relations: servitude with inferiority, privilege with superiority, and a middle state of neither, with equality.

Peasant proprietors turn into colons and serfs through misery.[1] They abandon personal liberty in order to get protection, and they accept servitude to get security, because they find that they have not enough of the force which prevails in the society to defend themselves. Their lords maintain superiority and exact for themselves social privilege. Such was the course of things at the downfall of the Roman Empire. When things began to improve in western Europe, the slave thought that it was comparative freedom when he was bound to the soil, because his family could not be separated, and he could not be removed from his home. A villain, however, would have thought it slavery to be reduced to the status of the serf, with unlimited servitudes to render. The serf, in his turn, thought it immeasurable gain to get his servitudes made definite, although a free man would have thought it slavery to be reduced to villainage. A villain could not go if he wanted to, but he could not be evicted if any one wanted to send him away. A free man can go if he wants to, and may be evicted if the other party chooses. At what point does the servitude of the villain, who must stay and work and pay

[1] This is a disputed point, on which a great deal has been written, with very great divergence of opinion. The above seems to me to be the best opinion.

feudal dues, turn into the blessing of the free tenant, who has fixity of tenure, but works and enjoys subject to taxes? Evidently it is at that point where the rights and benefits of holding and using become equal to the burdens and duties of taking and using — always with reference to the comparative value of other chances which present themselves. If a villain wants to stay, it is a privilege that no one can evict him; if he wants to go, it is a servitude that some one can retain him. If the landlord wants to force tenants to stay and till his land, it is a privilege for him to be able to force them to stay;[1] if the landlord wants to turn his land to other use, it is a servitude for him if he cannot evict his tenants. The modern peasant proprietor is one in whose status all these privileges and servitudes have met, coalesced, and disappeared, so that they are all summed up in the question whether his land is worth holding and tilling, subject to the taxes which must be paid on it.

In all these variations and mutations of social status and of the relations of classes, which we might pursue with any amount of detail through the history of the last fifteen hundred years, where is there any such thing as personal liberty of the sort which means doing as one likes? None have had it but those who were privileged — that is to say, it has lain entirely outside of civil liberty. It has had the form of an artificial social monopoly, and the fact has come out distinctly that liberty to do as you please in this world is only possible as a monopoly, but that it is the most valuable monopoly in the world, provided you can get it as a monopoly. You would realize it when you got into the position of Nero, or Louis XIV, or Catharine II.

[1] It was so in Denmark in the last century. See Falbe-Hansen, "Stavnsbaands-Løsningen," and the "Nation," 1889, p. 123.

We may gather some other cases in point.

A man who expects to go to the alms-house in his old age may regard a law of settlement as his patent of security, because it defines and secures his place of refuge. A man who is in the same status, but who is determined to better his condition by energy and enterprise, and tries to move, finds the law of settlement a curse, which may hold him down and force him to become a pauper.

If you are not able to make your own way in the world, you want to be protected by status; if you have ambition and ability to make a career for yourself, you find that status holds you down. In the former case it holds you up, or keeps you from falling; in the latter it holds you down, or keeps you from rising, on the whole, therefore, it keeps the society stagnant. If numbers do not increase very much, there may not be much suffering; if numbers do increase, there will be mendicancy, pauperism, vagabondage, and brigandage. It is a matter of great surprise that so little investigation has been expended on the vagabondage of the Middle Ages; the students of that period have kept their attention on those who were inside of its institutions, but the test of the mediæval system is to be found in a study of those who were kept out of its institutions.

If it is a mark of a free man, as in early Rome, to do military duty, every one may regard that function as a right or privilege rather than as a burden or duty; it may carry with it privileges of citizenship which make it worth more than it costs. If, however, the privileges of citizenship are lost and the burden of military duty increases, men will, as in the Dark Ages, sacrifice personal liberty as well as civil liberty in order to get rid of military duty. If, as in Russia, at least formerly, the privileges of citizenship are *nil*, and the burdens of mili-

tary duty very heavy, to be taken as a soldier is like incurring a capital sentence.

If a man enjoys a position of advantage compared with others, he is anxious to entail it on his children; if he is under shame or disadvantage, he is anxious to break the entail. One who is born of a duke is anxious to maintain hereditariness, but one who is born of the hangman rebels against it. The two are part of one system, and, in the long run, must stand or fall together.

He who is not able to attain to his standards of happiness by his own efforts is one of the "weak;" he does not want to be let alone; he wants some one to come and help him. He who is confident of his own power to accomplish his own purposes, wants to be let alone; he is "strong" and resents interference. In the long run, however, he who may be called upon for aid in the former case will insist on his right to interfere in the latter case, and he who claims freedom in the latter case will find that he must bear his own burdens in the former. Any other course would simply lead to a new system of privilege and servitude, for he who can choose his own ends and make somebody else help him attain them has realized privilege in its old and ever-abiding sense.

Privilege and servitude, therefore, when we classify them with reference to our present study, are the poles between which all forms of social status lie. Rights lie on the side toward privilege; duties lie on the side toward servitude. Rights and duties, however, are not separated by any gulf nor even by a line. They overlap each other. Not only are they parallel and connected by the social reaction, but also to different men or at different times the same thing often presents itself either as a right or a duty, *e.g.*, military duty. Somewhere between, however, lies the middle point or neutral point,

where there is neither privilege nor servitude, but where the rights and duties are in equilibrium, and that status is civil liberty in the only sense in which it is thinkable or realizable in laws, institutions, and history.

We have seen cases above in which the same men were under privilege and servitude at the same time, having accepted one as the price of the other. We have also seen cases in which the privilege of some involved the servitude of others. The former class of cases have been those which have had the most unhappy issue, for the privileges have often faded with time and the servitudes have been intensified. It is a bargain which a rational being can rarely afford to make, to incur servitude in the hope of privilege. Herein lies the curse of socialistic schemes when viewed from the side of the supposed beneficiary — they are a bait to defraud him of his liberty. I do not see how the German accident and workman's insurance can fail to act as a law of settlement, thereby, under a pretense of offering the workman security, robbing him of his best chance of improving his position. Still, the cases where a man incurs his own servitude for the sake of his own privilege are not as bad in some respects as those in which some have privileges for which others bear servitudes.

The modern jural state, at least of the Anglo-American type, by its hostility to privileges and servitudes, if not by direct analytical definition of its purpose, aims to realize the above definition of liberty. It is the one which fills our institutions at their best, and the one which forms the stem of our best civil and social ideals. If all privileges and all servitudes are abolished, the individual finds that there are no prescriptions left either to lift him up or to hold him down. He simply has all his chances left open that he may make out of

himself all there is in him. This is individualism and atomism.[1] There is absolutely no escape from it except back into the system of privileges and servitudes. The doctrine of the former is that a man has a right to make the most of himself to attain the ends of his existence; the doctrine of the latter is that a man has a right to whatever he needs to attain the ends of his existence. If the latter is true, then any one who is bound to furnish him what he needs is under servitude to him.

The fact, however, is rapidly making itself felt that this civil liberty of the modern type is a high and costly thing. A generation which has been glorying in it and heralding it to all the world as a boon and a blessing, to be had for the taking and to be enjoyed for nothing, begins to cry out that it is too great for them; that they cannot attain to it nor even bear it; that to be a free man means to come up to the standard and be it; and that it is asking too much of human nature. They want somebody to come and help them to be free. It has always been so. Men have failed of freedom not because kings, nobles, or priests enslaved them, but because liberty was too high and great for them. They would not rise to it; they would submit to any servitude rather; therefore they get servitude.

The strain of liberty is in the demand which it makes on the whole mass of the people for perpetual activity of reason and conscience to re-examine rights and duties, and to readjust their equilibrium. Civil liberty is not a scientific fact. It is not in the order of nature. It is not positive and objective; therefore it is not capable

[1] The writer of an otherwise good book (Rauber, "Urgeschichte des Menschen," ii, 291, ff.) indulges in an extraordinary screed against the atomists. He reaches the conclusion that fate is the state. To me it seems that fate is one's father and mother.

of constant and easy verification. It is historical and institutional. That means, however, that it is in the flux and change of civilization, wherefore the reason and conscience of men are kept in constant activity to re-examine accepted principles, and to reach new and more nearly correct solution of problems. On account of this activity, institutions are modified constantly, and the concrete contents of the public creed, about rights and duties, are undergoing constant change. It does not appear that this can ever be otherwise. There is an assumption that we can attain to social stability by finding out the right "form of government," or the correct "social system," but no ground for such a notion can be found in philosophy or history.[1] The equilibrium of rights and duties constitutes the terms on which the struggle for existence is carried on in a given society, after the reason and conscience of the community have pronounced judgment on those terms. The very highest conception of the state is that it is an organization for bringing that judgment to an expression in the constitution and laws. A state, therefore, is good, bad, or indifferent, according to the directness and correctness with which it brings to an expression the best reason and conscience of the people, and embodies their judgment in institutions and laws. The state, therefore, lives by deliberation and discussion, and by tacit or overt expressions of the major opinion.

The fact that laws and institutions must be constantly remolded in the progress of time by the active reason

[1] One of the most remarkable signs of the confusion reigning in social science is the fact that current discussion is marked by an attempt to force positive character upon the doctrines of the state, or to make a science of "political science," which never can be anything but historical and institutional; and at the same time to deny scientific character to economic laws and to insist that they are historical and institutional.

and conscience of the people, is what has probably given rise to the notion, just now so popular, that ethical considerations do, or ought to, regulate legislation and social relations. The doctrine, however, that institutions must in the course of generations slowly change to conform to social conditions and social forces, according to the mature convictions of great masses of men, is a very different thing from the notion that rights and duties should be at the sport of all the crude notions which, from time to time, may gain the assent of even an important group of the population.

Among the most important tides of thought at the present time which are hostile to liberty are socialism which always has to assume a controlling organ to overrule personal liberty and set aside civil liberty, in order to bring about what the socialist authorities have decided shall be done; nationalism, really a cognate of socialism, with opposition to emigration or immigration; state absolutism, which, in its newest form, insists that the individual exists for the state; and altruism, which, when put forward as an absolute dogma, is as anti-social as selfishness. All these are only the latest forms of the devices by which some men live at the expense of others. In their essence and principle they are as old as history, and not even the device of making the victims vote away their own liberty, apparently of their own free will, because they think they ought to do so, has anything new in it.

IS LIBERTY A LOST BLESSING?

[1887]

It was one of the superstitions of the eighteenth century that liberty belonged to some primitive state of society, that there was some time when men lived in a "state of nature," and that, at that time, they lived in Arcadian virtue, liberty, and simplicity. The conception of the "noble savage" belonged to the same superstition. Rousseau traced all the inequalities in human society to the cultivation of wheat — that is, agriculture — and to the use of iron — that is, tools. He was at least far more philosophical than his followers of our day who talk about "land" and "machinery." When Rousseau went back up the stream of civilization till he had passed wheat and iron, he came to the hunting savages of the Stone Age. Hence he took his idealized American Indian, a creature as mythical as the hippogriff, as his notion of the unspoiled, because untutored, son of nature.

The "state of nature" and the "social compact" are exploded superstitions, or, rather, they have given way to a new set of superstitions — those of the nineteenth century. Rousseau's idea of liberty, however, is not dead. The eighteenth-century notions of liberty and equality have passed into the most cherished political faiths of the nineteenth century. That notion of liberty is the anarchistic notion. It is the conception according to which liberty means unrestrainedness, emancipation from law, lawlessness, and antagonism to law, as it goes on to become more radical and more logical. This is the popular and prevailing conception of

liberty. It is supposed that the Anarchists carry it to some exaggeration, but there is no apparent rule for drawing the line to discriminate the error from the truth, and there is no dispute about the truth of the conception itself.

I shall presently return to this point and try to show that no such notion of liberty is warranted by history or philosophy. For my present purpose I wish to point out that men in a primitive or original state of society never enjoyed any such condition of liberty. No conception of the primitive man could well be more false to history than that which thinks of him as free in any sense of the word. The notion does not fit him at all. It is in the highest degree incongruous, because the whole conception of liberty in any sense is a product of civilization, and what little unrestrainedness of action men now enjoy they owe to the conquests of civilization. There can be no such thing as liberty where there is not rational reflection and choice. Primitive and savage men live by instinct, custom, and tradition; there is no right of private judgment among them; a dissenter among them is crushed or exiled, when to be exiled is to be exposed to perish in isolation from human society.

If we turn our attention particularly to industrial or economic activities, do we find that, in a primitive stage of society, there was freedom in this domain? De we find, as is so often asserted, that monopoly is a product of civilization, or of "capitalism," or that it is growing all the time? We certainly do not find any such thing.

Monopoly is in the order of nature. The relaxation of monopoly, and the introduction of the free play of effort, that is, of liberty and competition, is due to the growth of civilization. It seems to be believed by a great many of the popular writers of the day that there

not only was liberty in the primitive state of society, but that liberty did not then mean competition. There was not therefore, either monopoly or competition, but something else which has never been analyzed or defined. They seem to regard both competition and monopoly as products of civilization, and they denounce both at the same time. They also seem to think that monopoly and competition are at opposite poles, wide asunder, completely distinguishable.

Monopoly is a condition of things in which there is no scope for individual energy to be exerted so as to advance individual welfare, while competition is the state of things in which individual energy may be exerted so as to advance the welfare of the individual. These two combinations of social circumstances meet and to some extent intertwine; they are not separated by any gulf; in the middle ground where they meet, there are many cases which present mixtures of the two. We have limited monopolies with all degrees of limitation: almost all our railroads are limited monopolies; protected industries are monopolies which are limited in very various degrees, according as they are carried on by one, few, or many persons, making organization and combination easy or difficult.

In primitive states of society, monopoly prevails to such an extent that there is scarcely any scope at all for the application of individual energy to the effort for ameliorating one's position. It has been one of the longest and most painful achievements of civilization to open chances for the exertion of individual energy, and to give guarantees that the results of such exertion shall be secured to the one who made it. The progress in that direction within a hundred years has been enormous in proportion to any achievement in the same

direction in any earlier period. A century ago two men might have worked side by side at a loom; one might have been a man of the highest industrial talent, and the other lazy and inefficient; but the utmost difference of position to which they could attain, aside from vice or crime, was measured by the distance between a good and a bad hand-weaver. To-day the first would probably become a master of industry, a capitalist, and a millionaire, while the second might not be as well off now as then. The possible difference between them has therefore undergone an enormous widening. Napoleon and a private soldier were equal when each carried a gun in the ranks; but if each were put in command of a hundred thousand men, one would lead his army to slaughter, and the other would conquer a world with his.

In the case, however, of a modern captain of industry, a new natural monopoly has come in to take the place of the one which has been broken down — it is an interesting and instructive illustration of the constant recurrence of the monopoly principle. The master of industry has a monopoly in talent. He possesses the organizing and executive talent which is one of the rarest abilities that men ever possess, and the one talent which in our day, when industry is organized on a world-wide scale, on impersonal and automatic relations, is worth more than any other industrial factor. The men who have this talent are the ones on whom we all depend. There are millions of us who can do what we are told to do, but without the competent leadership of the masters of industry we should be as badly off as a great army of willing soldiers going into battle without competent generals. The executive talent is a natural monopoly; it has to be exploited under the methods of monopoly.

What men have done, therefore, in the course of civilization is this: they have broken down natural monopolies in the interest of free competitive effort. In the course of the development the natural elements have reappeared in new form, or new developments of the monopoly principle have presented themselves. These again have been modified or overcome, giving wider scope to liberty, but again producing fresh developments of monopoly, and so on until now. The reason why an artificial monopoly is so abominable is not only that it interferes to put some men down in order that others may rise at their expense, but that it is a working backward of the state machinery against that whole drift of civilization, which the state machine ought to fall in with and assist by constantly enlarging the fields of individual effort and modifying the play of natural monopoly by intelligent control.

It is a form of expression which lends itself to serious misapprehension, if we say of a certain natural fact that it is beneficent — a natural fact *is*, and that is the end of the matter, whether we men give it our sovereign approval or not. We have nothing to do with a natural fact except to note and accept its existence, and to govern ourselves accordingly. Still, when we note a natural fact we can often trace out its effects upon human interests, and perceive modes in which they are favorable or unfavorable to us. In that sense I hold that the above-mentioned play of monopoly for the reward of talent is beneficent. In other essays [1] I will examine a whole group of natural monopolies, to see if the same is true of them all, including that of land.

[1] Pp. 239 ff. below.

WHO IS FREE?

Is It the Savage?

Among the current phrases, we often meet with "wages-slavery," the "slavery of debt," "tenant-slaves," etc. In many cases there is, no doubt, in the use of this language, a conscious exaggeration, which is allowable for rhetorical effect; but it is easy to note the actual effect on uncritical people when such language comes to be taken literally. In fact, since, during the present century, all slavery has come to be considered detestable, and all freedom has come to be considered good, the terms "freedom" and "slavery" have become easy and current terms, which it is assumed that every one understands without trouble, so that they can be used as current coin of discussion. When it is assumed and admitted that each one of us ought to be free, that is commonly supposed to mean that no one of us ought to be under any disagreeable constraint in his activities or in the use of his time. If then we hold that civil and personal liberty are immeasurable blessings, and real moral necessities of mankind, it is necessary that we should carefully assure ourselves as to the true meaning of liberty, and should find out whether it is a delusion to suppose that mortals can ever be unconstrained; also whether anything is really gained by calling the wages system or the credit system "slavery."

First let us see whether the savage man is a free man. Questions about social organization have always been

discussed by reference to the primitive man, or the man in the state of nature; and so they must be discussed. The only difference is that we may depend for our notions of the primitive man and his ways either on speculation or on positive investigation. The eighteenth-century plan was to reach a notion of the primitive man by abstracting one after another the attributes of the civilized man, until a sort of residuum was obtained. It was thought that that must be what the original man in the state of nature was. Rousseau, in his "Reasons for the Inequalities Among Men," took the American Indian as his type of the primitive man; he took the notion of the red man as European travelers had described him before the middle of the eighteenth century, and, having rounded off the notion with some poetical additions, he went on to make his deductions as to civilization. He reached the result that the causes of social inequality were wheat and iron. To his imagination, the red men lived in blissful and Arcadian simplicity, and it was the introduction of agriculture, and the use of tools, which destroyed all that and introduced emulation, selfishness, and consequent inequality.

Rousseau has gone out of fashion, but his method and his ideas are repeated under a new form by the latest social speculators. But the error was not in seeking to find the origin of civilization or to compare the course of its development with the point of its beginning. Our latest science has to continue that effort; the origin of civilization has all the interest to us which belongs to the germs or beginnings of all great movements which we want to study. The wider the range of development which we can study, the more correct the knowledge which we obtain of it; modern scholars have therefore

devoted the most eager study to the facts of primitive society and the origin of civilization.

If, now, we use the information which we possess about the savage man to test the notion that he possessed natural liberty, we find that he was and is anything but free in the sense of being unrestrained. It might do for Rousseau to take the American Indian as a type of the primitive, or "original," or "natural" man, but we could not accept him as such. The Indian is far back in civilization when he is regarded from the stand-point of the civilized man; but if he is regarded with reference to the real and ultimate origin of society, he is very far on up the scale.

If, then, we take the notion of the Indian, or any man of lower civilization, as wandering freely and spending his time in blissful idleness, correct information shows that there are no facts to support it. A wandering savage wanders to get his living, and as a rule he finds it more than he can do; the exigencies of subsistence hold him as tightly as they hold a factory hand, and his success is far more uncertain. If he unites with others like himself in order, by organization, to increase his power, then he must submit to discipline of the most severe kind, enforced by penalties of the highest severity. Instead of being lawless he is under traditions and customs which admit of no relaxation whatever; he who tries to revolt against the tradition is thrust out into banishment or put to death. There is no such thing conceivable as private judgment or dissent. He who breaks a custom is an outlaw.

The noble savage may also wander out-of-doors, it is true, and within a certain range, within which he and his ancestors have bought, with their sufferings and blood, a knowledge of nature; but though he understands the

forces of nature very well, outside of that certain range everything in nature is a terror to him. His mythology bears witness to this. The civilized man is light and careless, or even merry in the face of nature, because he understands her so well; when nature, however, puts on her terrors or her mysteries, we quickly lose our spirits and come to feel our insignificance. Men to whom nature is always terrible or mysterious never win freedom in dealing with her.

The struggle of man to win his existence from nature is one which he begins with no advantages at all, but utterly naked and empty-handed. He has everything to conquer. Evidently it is only by his achievements that he can emancipate himself from the difficulties of his situation. His position, instead of furnishing a notion of liberty, furnishes an ideal of non-liberty; and liberty, instead of being a status at the beginning of civilization, appears rather to be a description of the sense and significance of civilization itself; that is, civilization has given us a measure of emancipation from the unlimited constraint and oppression under which mankind began.

Disease and old age are the most pitiless hardships of life, the ones in the face of which liberty is the greatest mockery. Even against these civilization has given us a great enlargement, but the savage man is helpless against them; old age comes on very early for him, on account of all the other hardships of his condition. The killing of old people by their children among savage tribes seems to us inexpressibly shocking, but this custom means something very different from the selfishness of the young; it testifies to the fact that the first liberty of all, the liberty to exist, becomes an unendurable burden to the savage man when he becomes old.

Now, it is a remarkable fact that if we confine our attention to that conception of liberty which consists in wild unrestraint, the realization of it is not found on any of the lowest stages of civilization at all, but on one which is comparatively high, *viz.*, the pastoral or nomadic stage; it is among the nomadic hordes of Central Asia or among the men of the Bedouin type that the wildest and most untamed form of personal liberty is to be found. Along with it, however, goes ferocity, the practise of plunder as a virtue, blood-thirstiness, and brutishness. Most remarkable of all, however, is the fact that slavery begins on this stage; it appears that men subjugated each other on the same stage on which they subjugated animals. If this observation is true (and although not completely established it has been accumulating evidence in its favor), then it is to be noted that the notion of wild, unrestrained, personal liberty found an approximate realization only when society was so differentiated that some could get this freedom because others had been reduced to servitude.

The notion that liberty was a primitive endowment of the race, which has been lost or stolen in the course of civilization, must be abandoned; study of primitive society shows that it is all false and unfounded. It is an exploded myth like the "state of nature" or the "social compact." We shall next see whether there can be liberty, in the sense of unconstraint, in civilization.

Who Is Free? Is It the Civilized Man?

A schoolboy looks through the window and wishes that the hours of restraint were over so that he could run free; he regards with envy the animals which run "at liberty" and the birds which fly in the air. The

poets have also used the birds of the air as symbols of liberty, and the philosophers have assumed that the original savage enjoyed the same liberty as the beasts and the birds. They have judged like the schoolboy. The schoolboy would find little of the liberty he imagines if he could run in the fields but had no one to earn his living for him. In fact, one of the first disillusions which awaits the civilized schoolboy, when his school-days are over, and he gets liberty, is to find that the necessity of earning a living proves all his visions of freedom to be silly and empty. If he had known more about the bird, he would have known that the bird does not move through the air with much more freedom than a stone. The beast has no freedom because he has no intelligent and conscious choice. In like manner, the savage acts from instinct and unreflectively, and the notion of liberty, as we understand it, does not apply to him. He moves about, it is true, out-of-doors, with a certain degree of unrestraint, but his life is automatic and unreflective; it offers no room for the exercise of choice; it is, in general, absorbed in the desire of getting enough to eat — it is devoted to this business with an intensity and directness which leave no room for liberty of choice.

The mediæval formula of emancipation consisted in declaring that the emancipated person might go where he chose. This seems to indicate that the mediæval notion of liberty was freedom of going and coming. It would accord, then, with the sort of freedom envied by the schoolboy, and enjoyed by the savage; but the serf who had been emancipated found that after all he must go where he could earn his living; that his freedom of movement was soon exhausted; and that whatever he had won consisted, not in wandering about, not in becom-

ing a vagabond, but in using his powers to further his own happiness, not that of others.

Shall we infer, then, that liberty — meaning by liberty still unrestrainedness of action — is only possible for the civilized people, who can and do make intelligent choices, at least, between different aims and different codes of conduct?

The civilized man has won immense control over nature in certain senses and in certain ways; what to the savage man was a terror is to him a slave. All this has become commonplace; but what is vastly more important, but not so generally understood, is that we have won a diversity in our ways of meeting nature. If she threatens us or harms us in one way, we can avoid that way and meet her in another, where she serves our purpose. It is this above all which marks the position of the civilized man, as compared with the savage man, in dealing with nature. The latter stood face to face with nature on few and direct lines; he had little or no variety in his mode of life, little diversity in his lines of activity. Hence, if he was blocked on those to which he was accustomed, he suffered direct defeat. Furthermore, all were defeated at the same time, so that the society suffered a general disaster. In a highly organized society, with well-developed arts and sciences, such cannot be the case. On the contrary, what harms one exercise of human energy benefits another; what hurts one group in the society is an advantage to another; what proves a disaster to one region is a blessing to another. Calamities are common enough, but their scope is limited; they are offset by other things; their effect is alleviated by help from the uninjured parts of the society; it is localized and restricted, so that recovery is, for the society as a whole, quick and easy.

It follows that the civilized man has a measure of liberty under the natural conditions of life. He constantly exaggerates the measure of this liberty and boasts of it too much, for it is really only a little elbow-room which has been won; but his condition is not the constrained necessity of the savage man.

The civilized man has also developed power of intelligent reflection and rational choice. Leaving aside all controversies of the metaphysicians on this point, we may simply observe that the civilized man has the power to choose his ends in a higher degree than the savage possesses any such power, and he has also immeasurably extended the range of his activities, and so the possibilities of his choice. Liberty of disposition of his powers is worth, to the civilized man, incalculably more than to the savage.

It appears, then, so far, that liberty is the endowment of the civilized man, and that he needs only to go on and use it; but further study will show altogether different aspects of the matter.

There is no good on earth that comes gratuitously — there is always a price to be paid. The price of liberty is liberty. The civilized man is born into ties and bonds which either do not exist for the savage man, or are very light for him. The ties of family are arbitrarily strong on some of the middling grades of civilization; in the lowest grades they are generally very loose. Among civilized peoples they form bonds which create duties and obligations constraining liberty. The inheritance of civilization brings burdens and duties to those through whom it comes; it entails duties also to that civilized state, by whose institutions the inheritance is preserved and its descent guaranteed. The civilized man is born into a whole network of restraints which the savage does

not know, or which are evidently the same restraints which we have already noticed in the case of the savage, only in an altered form. I cannot do what I want to do, because I must do what my duty to my parents and my country calls upon me to do — a duty which is not arbitrary or traditional, but rationally deduced from the relations into which I am born.

The liberty of the civilized man also costs discipline and education. Once more, we find that the civilized man has squirmed around into a new position, which makes things wear a little different aspect, but the real case is not essentially altered. The savage youth has his hard discipline to undergo, so that he may endure the hardships of savage life and fulfil the career of a savage man; our schoolboy, eager to escape his duty, is under the same constraint in a new form. The higher the attainments in civilization the heavier and longer this task of taking up and fitting upon ourselves our inheritance.

Another part of the cost of sharing in the products of civilization, including its liberty, is that we must enter into the organization of civilized society, and bear our part in its work of production. Civilization is built on capital; it is all the time using up capital; it cannot be maintained, unless the supply of capital is kept up. It is not a figure of speech to say that it is like the necessity of fuel if we want to keep up the speed of a railroad train, because the railroad train is really a case in point. To get a share in the products, we must do a share of the work, and when we do that our liberty is gone. The bigger the crowd, the more intense the struggle; the higher the organization, the more imperative its coercion on all its members. We cannot get our living unless we get into the organization; when, however, we once

get into it, it is ruin to fall out, but if we stay in, we must submit. We must make contracts binding us to the other members of the organization, and we must keep them. But they fetter our liberty; we must spend our time at the bench, the counter, or the desk, and we cannot get away. Where is there any liberty, in the sense of unrestrained self-will, for the civilized man? The declaimers about the ills of civilization are not astray in their facts; the civilized man is the slave of the industrial organization, of contracts, of the market, of supply and demand — call it what you will, it is, after all, only the weight of existence, and liberty means for us just what it did for the savage; it means that we may maintain existence if we can.

Capital is necessary to civilized existence; so they tell us that we are nowadays the slaves of capital, because we cannot do what we want to do without it. We borrow it; then they say that we are the slaves of debt, or of "hard bargains," because we have made a contract which it is irksome to fulfil. We are the slaves of the market, because we cannot get a satisfactory price for our goods. We are the slaves of supply and demand, because we cannot get the wages we would like for our services. So we get in a rage and propose revolution, or, at least, state-intervention, because we supposed that we could do as we liked, and now we find that we cannot.

Who Is Free? Is It the Millionaire?

The uncivilized man is not free, because he is bound by the hardships of his condition, by tradition and custom, by superstition, and by ignorance. He can only escape from the limitations thus fastened upon him by education, and organized labor, systematically applied

to overcome the difficulties of his situation. If, however, he undertakes this course, he must submit to the constraint of orderly and persistent exertion; he must till the land, or he must shut himself up in a factory for ten hours a day. These conditions are impossible for him — they are just the things which he cannot do. On the other hand, the civilized man, if he wants the liberty to roam about which the savage possesses, must live as the savage lives, by hunting and fishing, and his demands on life must be reduced to the range of those of the savage. If he chooses this line of policy and effort, however, he finds that he cannot earn a living, even such as the savage man gets, because he has not the necessary knowledge and skill for that mode of life.

Hence it appears that the notion of liberty, as emancipation from irksome constraint, finds no realization at either end of the scale, but that men give up some things to get others; that they sacrifice one liberty to get another; that they change their point of view and their notions, and that liberty consists in a better adjustment of their notions to their situation at a given time. What we commonly boast of as progress consists in measuring the situation at one time by the notions of another. It would be just as impossible for operatives from a New England cotton mill to live on the plains as for Indians to work ten hours a day in a New England cotton mill. Whether the historical movement by which society has moved from the life of the Indians to that of the cotton operatives has been progress or degeneration, depends on whether it is viewed from the standpoint of the Indian or the white man. We must be convinced that liberty to do as one pleases is not a gift or boon of nature; it is not a natural and original situation which we have lost, or which has been taken from us. All that notion van-

ishes into the realm of illusions. All our ferocious demands that our birthright shall be given back to us, and all our savage threats about those who have robbed us, go with it.

It was an easy way to attain the objects of our desire to put them into the list of the "rights of man," or to resolve that "we are and of right ought to be" as we should like to be. That method has had great popularity for the last hundred years and is now extremely popular; but if we have any liberty, it is because our ancestors have won it by toil and blood. It is not a boon, it is a conquest, and if we ever get any more, it will be because we make it or win it. The struggle for it, moreover, must be aimed, not against each other, but against nature. When men quarrel with each other, as every war shows, they fall back under the dominion of nature. It is only when they unite in co-operative effort against nature that they win triumphs over her and ameliorate their condition on earth.

It may be said, then, that liberty is to be found at the summit of civilization, and that those who have the resources of civilization at their command are the only ones who are free. But the resources of civilization are capital; and so it follows that the capitalists are free, or, to avoid ambiguities in the word capitalist, that the rich are free. Popular language, which speaks of the rich as independent, has long carried an affirmation upon this point. In reality the thirst for wealth is a thirst for this independence of the ills of life, and the interdependence of wealth on civilization and civilization on wealth is the reason why the science of wealth is concerned with the prime conditions of human welfare, and why all denunciations of desire to increase or to win wealth are worse than childish.

A native African, of the tribes who own cattle, may increase his herds to a greater and greater number. He has no other conception of wealth — in the absence of commerce wealth admits of no further differentiation for him. He soon comes to a limit beyond which he cannot watch over his property, and then if he hires somebody to take care of it for him, in effect, he shares it with them. Some of the socialists seem to have in mind some limited right of property, under which this would be the ideal and only mode in which property could be held. The native African cannot, of course, use more than so much of the useful things which his herds produce; he and his family can, at best, only eat, drink, and wear so much. After that, if he wants to own more, it is mere vanity and vexation, and at last becomes such a burden that it defeats itself, and that, in trying to escape this burden, he really, if not avowedly, gives the property away to those who take care of it. In the meantime, although his herds have emancipated him from the cares of his mode of life, that is, from hunger and thirst and cold, they are a very precarious property; they offer a very vulnerable point of attack for an enemy; they awaken cupidity; they cost anxiety; and if they are carried off by a stronger enemy, they leave their former possessor in deeper misery and helplessness than if he had never had them.

If any one regards that as a paradisaical state of things or as a rational limit of the form and mode of property which might be wisely allowed, he must, of course, condemn trade and money and civil government, because these have led on to that development of society in which a man can have, hold, and enjoy indefinite wealth. When trade is introduced, it allows the owner of herds to part with the surplus of them for other things which

he is glad to get. Trade, however, is limited until money is provided as a means for carrying it on. It is security of property, established by a firm civil government, which makes it possible to hold property in amount indefinitely beyond what one can watch and defend by one's own vigilance.

Wealth, therefore, in a highly organized civilized society, gives an emancipation from the ills of earthly life which is enormous, when we take as a standard for it the condition of the poor or the uncivilized. It completely banishes the anxiety for food and drink. It has put millions of the human race in such a position that, although they call themselves poor, nevertheless they never in their whole lives know what it is to feel fear lest they may not have food to eat — an anxiety which, on the other hand, is the consuming care of uncivilized life in general, and makes every other thought impossible. Wealth has created for all civilized men, even the poorest of them, an artificial environment of clothing, shelter, artificial heat, pavements, sewers, means of locomotion, education, and intelligence, a vast amount of which is common property, and is taken and assumed without thought, as if it belonged to the order of nature. It all goes into the common stock, justly enough, because it is really in large part a product of the organization in which all bear parts which cannot be analyzed out and paid for by supply and demand.

A man who is rich, therefore, in this society, can draw to himself and his family, elaborate, highly perfected, and efficient defense against the ills of life. The things which shorten life are work and care; he cannot abolish these, but he can reduce their power in a very important measure. It is all enlargement, liberty, intelligent liberty in the highest and best sense, fit for the men who

work and achieve, but do not wail or dream. It issues in leisure, the most valuable of goods in this connection, being a means of quiet and undisturbed application of mental force to the planning of new efforts and new achievements.

So much for this view of the matter. We may be ready to say: liberty is a product of civilization, but it is only for the rich. There is, however, another view which remains to be taken in order to find out whether, among us, the popular notion of liberty is realized by the millionaire or the tramp.

Who Is Free? Is it the Tramp?

The two things which kill men are work and worry. The man who has nothing is under the bondage of labor; the man who has property is under the bondage of care. He who owns land and has raised a crop must be anxious, when the harvest-time approaches, lest another shall reap it. He leaves it exposed because he cannot protect it, but he fears to sleep lest he should lose the fruits of his labor. If this care does not exist, it must be because civil order and security exist to such a degree that it is done away with. Civil security, however, lies, as some of our friends are so fond of reminding us, in the voluntary effort of all his neighbors to defend his property for him. He who has lands or goods has given pledges to fortune, and exposed himself to her shafts, at so many points.

It is a childish notion that wealth keeps itself, and throws off its product without effort or care; but one would think to read what we read that it was very widely entertained. To keep wealth is as hard as to get it. Moth and rust conspire to destroy it; the covetousness

of man is in feud against it. The follies and mistakes of individuals and nations are punished by the destruction of it. It is not possible to make increase from it unless it is put to reproductive use; but every application of it to new production involves the risking of it on a judgment of facts which cannot be ascertained with certainty; some of which may be future. In every application of capital to reproduction it must undergo transmutation or transformation. We seek it again in a new product; but before we can get it again we must go through an operation of exchange involving value. Whether, therefore, we shall find our capital again with increase, or not, is a question which can only be answered by the result; and it will at best depend upon chances of the market, which defy foresight.

We have already seen that the man who sells services in the market is under the hazards of the market. The worst troubles of which he complains are the tyranny of supply and demand, and the freaks of the market which interrupt the demand for labor. If he hires anybody to carry this risk for him, he has to pay for that service. That is the explanation of many differences in the comparative rate of wages in different employments.

Now, however, we see that the owner of capital, if he tries to get profit on it, encounters also this same tyranny of the market. If he hires any one to take the risk for him, he must pay for it; if he wants the great gains, he can get them only by putting in the effort and care which are required for the successful conduct of great enterprises. The conditions of this success are as stringent and coercive as those of the labor market, if not more so. The vigilance which conducts industrial enterprises can never relax: if one owns cattle and horses, he must guard them against accidents and disease; if

he owns houses, he must fear fire and storm; if he owns ships, he must expect accidents and shipwreck; if he owns railroads, his chances of profit are precarious for a dozen reasons. I remember once hearing a mechanic who had become rich say something like this: "I used to throw down my tools at six o'clock and think no more of my work until morning. I envied rich men and thought that they had only to live at ease and free from care; but since I have had property I have had more sleepless nights than in all my life before."

I pass over the cares of riches which belong only to the care of objects of luxury like horses and villas and yachts, and also the cares which come from the burdens laid on wealth by other people who know what should be the duties of wealth and are eager to see that wealth performs them. There is another set of constraints and limitations which comes from the fact that the contract relations of wealth are necessarily far more numerous and complicated than those of poverty. The great limitation on the liberty of the civilized man is that which comes from his contracts. Society is bound together by these, and they increase in a high ratio by the side of the increase of wealth; they forbid a man to do as he would like to do, and force him to do what he has agreed to do; he is under bonds to do this from the very fact of his wealth, which makes him responsible. It is one of the injustices of modern society which are never mentioned in our current discussions, but one of the most mischievous from which we suffer, that a man who has no property may break contracts with impunity.

It is no light thing, also, that a man who has property should be responsible for all damages which may proceed forth from himself or his property against any of his fellow-citizens; which liability, although it is as

great in law and morals against a poor man, is, nevertheless, practically null in the latter case. With the tendency of the law to extend the liability of the owners of capital for all the injuries attendant upon the use of capital, even to those injuries which proceed from it only constructively, and to relieve those who have no capital from ordinary human responsibility for themselves, this injustice is increasing. It is one of the results of the reckless dogmatizing which is going on in regard to social obligations, founded, not upon reasonable considerations of the relations which exist, but upon previously adopted partiality for one set of interests. Any assertion that wealth ought to have social or civil privileges sends a shiver of horror through modern society, which asserts that all men are equal; but how can two men be equal, one of whom is pecuniarily responsible for his contracts and his torts and the other is not?

It has been said above that if the man of property escapes the first anxieties about the possession of property, it must be because he lives in an orderly, civilized state, in which his neighbors concur to guarantee his security of possession. Hence, however, comes also the constraint of liberty by the state which protects; he who relies upon state protection must pay for it by limitations of liberty; by every new demand which he makes on the state, he increases its functions and the burden of it on himself. Weary of protecting himself, he begs the state to take care of him; the state, however, only orders him to take care of himself in co-operation with others under its supervision, and it takes toll from him in money, time, and services for giving him this good advice and this wholesome coercion.

From all this it appears, then, that in getting property we do not get liberty, in the sense of absence of

constraint and opportunity to do as we please. We have only changed the form of our constraint. Tired of barbarism and its limitations, we take civilization at its price. The price, however, is a new constraint. It consists in care and worry; in police regulation and all the compromises of civilization; in co-operation to sustain institutions, and in voluntary submission to law. The instruments of the new servitude are the means which served to emancipate us from the old one; the rich man, if he gets more of the emancipation, gets also more of the new servitude. Liberty has not been found yet. We are like men mired in a swamp, who, in pulling out one leg or one arm, only plunge others more deeply in — so long as we follow this chimæra of liberty here on earth to do as we please.

But there is another case which should be considered before we give up our pursuit of the idea as a mere chimæra. May not the tramp be the true free man? He is a civilized man. He lives in a civilized community; he shares in its institutions; he contributes his vote to its political welfare; he takes a philosophical view of wealth, and avoids its cares; he nourishes a profound sentiment of its duties; he has no property to perish, no investments to worry about. The story is told of a tramp who came to a certain valley, which was inundated by a freshet. There was a great demand for help to carry persons and property in boats to a place of safety. The tramp threw down the bundle which contained all he had in the world, and declared: "This is my harvest." He demanded ten dollars a day, and went to work at that rate. This was true philosophy; he kept out of the labor market until the "conjuncture" of supply and demand was all on his side, and then he went in.

The tramp enjoys the true liberty of going and coming, which, in the case of the barbarian, is only apparent and delusive. He is free from the restraints of civilization. Whether he is free from the superstition and traditional servitude of mind which marks the savage, it is difficult to say — it does not belong to the definition of his case that he should be so free. To the extent, then, to which he is free to do as he pleases, he is so because, although born into civilized society and continuing in it, he has abandoned most of the blessings of civilization, and wins the rest only by begging, or taking them without rendering any equivalent. He must upon occasion endure hunger and cold like the savage man; he must endure outlawry, suspicion, and contempt; in some states he finds himself a criminal, in fact, a felon. In such cases he is not merely a drone or a neutral, still less is he a tolerated parasite; he is at war with society. That is to say, a certain small number of men can realize the dreamed-of poetical liberty of the barbarian by seeking it in the midst of civilization, if they will endure contumely to get it, and if they will sacrifice all the other blessings of civilization for it.

LIBERTY AND RESPONSIBILITY

From one end to the other of history, from one extreme to the other of the social scale, we can find no status in which men realize the kind of liberty which consists in doing as one pleases, or in unrestrainedness of action. If we should go on to consider the case of the learned man, or the statesman, or the monarch, or any other class and position, we should find the same. The Emperor Nicholas of Russia, who left the reputation of a military autocrat behind, complained that his Minister took a position before the chimney, and, to everything which the Emperor proposed, simply answered: "It is not permitted to do it." Liberty to do as one pleases is not of this world, for the simple reason that all human and earthly existence is conditioned on physical facts. The life of man is surrounded and limited by the equilibrium of the forces of nature, which man can never disturb, and within the bounds of which he must find his chances.

If that seems too ponderous and abstract for the reader, it may be interpreted as follows. Man must get his living out of the earth. He must, in so doing, contend with the forces which control the growth of trees, the production of animals, the cohesion of metals in ores; he must meet conditions of soil and climate; he must conform to the conditions of the social organization, which increases the power of a body of men to extort their living from the earth, but at the price of mutual concessions and inevitable subordination. Organization means more power, but it also means constraint, and,

at every step of advancing civilization, while we seem to get nearer to this form of liberty, the means of emancipation proves a new bond. Such being the case, it is a plain delusion to suppose that we can ever emancipate ourselves from earth while we are upon it.

Yet men have, in all the higher forms of civilization, been determined that they would have this liberty. They have, as it were, determined that they would fly. They have made liberty a dream, a poetic illusion, by which to escape, at least for an hour, from the limitations of earth; they have put liberty at the beginning of all things, in the "state of nature," or far on in the future, in a millennium. Within the last century, especially, they have elaborated notions of liberty as a natural endowment, belonging to everybody, a human birthright. Their experience has been that they did not get it, and, when this clashed with the smooth doctrines in which they had been educated, they have become enraged.

Now it will be most advantageous to notice that this notion of liberty has a certain historical justification, and, when historically considered, a relative truth.

The mediæval social and political system consisted of a complex of customs and institutions such that, when we come to analyze them, and find out their philosophy, we find they imply all the time that men are, but for political institutions and social arrangements, under universal servitude. The point of departure of administration and legislation was that a man had no civil rights or social liberty, but what was explicitly conferred by competent authority, and that the sum of rights which any person had were not such as belonged generally to all members of the society, but such as each, by his struggles and those of his ancestors, had come to possess. The modern view gets its interpretation, and its

relative justification, by reference to and in antagonism to this; the doctrine of natural liberty as an antecedent status of general non-restraint was a revolt against the doctrine just stated. It meant to affirm that laws and state institutions ought to be built upon an assumption that men were, or would be but for law, not all unfree, but all free, and that freedom ought to be considered, not a product of social struggle and monarchical favor or caprice, but an ideal good which states could only limit, and that they ought not to do this except for good and specific reason, duly established. The nineteenth-century state is built on this construction. We are obliged all the time to assume, in all our studies, certain constructions, of which we say only that things act as if they were under such and such a formula, although we cannot prove that that formula is true. Institutions grow under conditions into certain forms which can be explained and developed only by similar constructions.

Modern civil institutions have been developed as if man had been, anterior to the state, and but for the state, in a condition of complete non-restraint. The notion has been expanded by the most pitiless logic, and at this moment a score, or perhaps a hundred, eager "reforms" are urged upon grounds which are only new and further deductions from it. At this point, like the other great eighteenth-century notions which are also true relatively when referred back to the mediæval notions which they were intended to combat, the notion of abstract liberty turns into an independent dogma claiming full philosophical truth and authority. In that sense, as we have seen, it is untrue to fact.

When we turn to test the dogma of liberty by history and experience, we find immediately that the practical

reason why no man can do as he likes in a human society is that he cannot get rid of responsibility. It is responsibility which fetters an autocrat, unless he is a maniac. It is that which binds the millionaire, which limits the savage who is responsible to his tribe, which draws narrow lines about the statesman, and which will just as inevitably fetter a democratic majority unless such a majority proposes social suicide. Responsibility rises up by the side of liberty, correlative, commensurate, and inevitable. Responsibility to nature is enforced by disease, poverty, misery, and death; responsibility to society is enforced by discord, revolution, national decay, conquest, and enslavement. Within the narrow limits of human institutions, liberty and responsibility are made equal and co-ordinate whenever the institutions are sound. If they are not equal and co-ordinate, then he who has liberty without responsibility incurs a corresponding loss of liberty, or servitude. Those men and classes who at any time have obtained a measure of abstract liberty to do as they like on earth, have got it in this way — at the expense of the servitude of somebody else. Thousands of men died that Napoleon Bonaparte might, in a measure, have his way; great aristocracies have won wide unrestraint by displacing the lives and property of thousands of others, when the aristocracies have been built up by a remission of responsibility.

The worst modern political and social fallacies consist in holding out to the mass of mankind hopes and affirmations of right according to which they are entitled by prerogative to liberty without responsibility. The current political philosophy, having fallen under the dominion of romanticism (except as to war and diplomacy), has apparently no power to do more than to fol-

low and furnish platitudes for the popular tendency, or to oppose all forms of liberty in the interest of socialistic equality. The prosecution of that line of criticism, however, lies aside from my present purpose.

I have now arrived at the point where the true idea of liberty, as the greatest civil good, can be brought forward. The link between liberty and responsibility can be established and upheld only by law; for this reason, civil liberty, the only real liberty which is possible or conceivable on earth, is a matter of law and institutions. It is not metaphysical at all. Civil liberty is really a great induction from all the experience of mankind in the use of civil institutions; it must be defined, not in terms drawn from metaphysics, but in terms drawn from history and law. It is not an abstract conception; it is a series of concrete facts. These facts go to constitute a status — the status of a freeman in a modern jural state. It is a product of institutions; it is embodied in institutions; it is guaranteed by institutions. It is not a matter of resolutions, or "declarations," as they seemed to think in the last century. It is unfriendly to dogmatism. It pertains to what a man shall do, have, and be. It is unfriendly to all personal control, to officialism, to administrative philanthropy and administrative wisdom, as much as to bureaucratic despotism or monarchical absolutism. It is hostile to all absolutism, and people who are well-trained in the traditions of civil liberty are quick to detect absolutism in all its new forms. Those who have lost the traditions of civil liberty accept phrases.

The questions in regard to civil liberty are: do we know what it is? do we know what it has cost? do we know what it is worth? do we know whether it is at stake?

Liberty and Law

Sir Robert Filmer defined freedom to be "liberty of every one to do as he lists, to live as he please, and not to be tied by any laws"; on this definition he based a philosophical treatise on absolutism in government, affirming its natural necessity and political propriety. He was perfectly right, for that definition of liberty is the one which would lead to despotism. At the same time, it is the anarchistic definition. There is no contradiction in this. Sir Robert meant by his definition to lay a basis from which to affirm that liberty is impossible, absurd, irrational; the anarchists affirm the same definition, and take it to be rational, real, and true. Around this issue all the great controversies in political science of the last two hundred years have raged, and around this issue they must revolve without solution so long as the metaphysical notion of liberty is accepted.

The liberty to do what one lists can never be complete, unless it is supplemented by the further liberty not to do anything. A man who had this liberty might, therefore, be in the society but not of it, living upon it and enjoying a privilege to exert his energies in any way, no matter how harmful to other men. The notions of social rights, social duties, and liberty are, therefore, all born together, and correct definitions of them all will be consistent and coherent. The notion of liberty which we have been criticizing, however, is hostile to all notions of rights and duties; the man who had that liberty would have no duties, nor any rights, properly speaking, because he would have privileges. Rights and duties, in a combination consistent with liberty, constitute the social bond. Such rights, duties, and liberty

are the elements of political institutions which give them their form and value.

We who live in the midst of a modern civilized state, with high security of persons and property, with well-defined rights, with no burdensome duties, with no privileges secured to some at the expense of others, easily assume that this all comes of itself, that it is the natural order of things, and that any departure from it would have to be forced by injustice. We believe that men have easily made up their minds that they would have it in this way, and that, by adopting proper resolutions at the right moment, they have brought it about. We therefore suppose that all we have is secured to us by the most stable and unquestionable reality, that we run no risk of losing it, that we can afford to find fault with it, throw it away, despise it, and break it in pieces.

The facts are far otherwise. The peace, order, security, and freedom from care of modern civilized life are not the product of human resolutions; they are due at last to economic forces, which, by expanding the conditions of human existence during the last three hundred years, have made all which we possess possible. Our history has been written on politics almost entirely; and, without joining in the current easy abuse of it on that account, we may fairly say that people have not learned at all to understand the extent to which political resolutions are controlled by economic conditions, or the extent to which political and social institutions are conditioned in economic facts. It is not too much to say that economic facts are always present and controlling in the apparently arbitrary acts of constitution-makers and legislators. Our whole history must be reconstructed with a view to this fact. If that is once done, we shall understand better the narrow range within which the

law-givers, philosophers, constitution-makers, and legislators can work.

It is the opening of the new continents and the great discoveries and inventions which have made this modern age; they account for the power of man, and they have, by their form, conditioned the mode in which that power might be used. It has been wasted and abused to such an extent that man has never enjoyed more than a small percentage of the real power which was at his disposal for the enhancement of his earthly existence; and the modes in which it has been wasted have been chiefly those of social policy and political device. The ignorance, folly, and wickedness of statesmen, together with the incompetence of the social philosophers, seem great enough to have brought the world to universal penury, if the discoveries of science and the inventions of art had not been rapid and strong enough to bear all the losses and leave a surplus, by virtue of which mankind could gain something. The chief source of new power, however, has been the simplest of all, that is, an extension of population over new land. If a half-million proletarians in Europe should inherit each an estate, no one would think it any mystery that they were not proletarians any more; why, then, should it be a mystery that they are not proletarians when they have inherited an estate in America or Australia by going to it? To this we append, in passing, another useful reflection. If the statesmen and philosophers of the past made such mistakes, which are now visible to us, how do we know we are not making equally gross mistakes, which somebody will expose a century hence? We do not know it. We should hold this ever in mind. It is exactly the reason for distrusting our wisdom and for "letting things alone."

The political and civil liberty which we enjoy has issued out of all the stumbling and blundering of the past. The errors have been cured, to some extent, by bitter experience. The institutions which are strong and sound have only grown up through long correction, and have been purified of the stubborn folly of men only after long and bitter suffering. They are not stable; they are not founded in immovable facts; they are delicate products of care and study and labor. They could be easily lost and they require high good sense and self-control for their maintenance. Civil liberty is in the highest degree unstable. If we should fill libraries with written constitutions we could never guarantee liberty. Terms change their meaning, ideas move through a development of their own; nothing stands still here more than elsewhere. Intelligent conscience and educated reason are the only things which can maintain liberty, for they will constantly be needed for new cases and new problems. We could not make a greater mistake than to suppose that we could throw down all social institutions and guarantees, and still keep all the peace, order, security, and freedom from political anxiety, which we now enjoy. Time and again in history men have sacrificed liberty rather than incur anarchy. When anarchy comes and every one tries to realize the liberty to do as he likes, the man who has anything knows that he will not be able to do as he likes, because it will take all his energies and more to protect his property. He knows that some of the other people who will be doing as they like will be sure to rob him. The man who is too young or too old, or physically weak, and the women, know that they will not do as they like, because somebody else will make them do as he likes. These will all flee to any protection which can save them from plunder and abuse,

because liberty and anarchy are totally inconsistent with each other, no matter what the definition we give to liberty. Filmer was right when he held that, if liberty meant license to do as you list, it made despotism the only rational and possible form of civil government.

There is, therefore, no liberty but liberty under law. Law does not restrict liberty; it creates the only real liberty there is — for liberty in any real sense belongs only to civilized life and to educated men. The sphere of it is not in the beast-like non-reflection of savages; it is in the highest self-determination of fully educated and responsible men. It belongs to defined rights, regulated interests, specified duties, all determined in advance, before passions are excited and selfishness engaged, prescribed in solemn documents, and guaranteed by institutions which work impersonally without fear or favor. Such are the institutions under which we live. Their integrity is worth more to us than anything else in the domain of politics; their improvement, that they may perform their functions better, is the highest political task of our civilization. That is why liberty in its true sense is worth more than the suppression of intemperance, or the restriction of trusts, or the limitation of corporations, or any other pet reform. Liberty which consists in the equilibrium of rights and duties for all members of the state under the same prescriptions, liberty which secures each man, in and under the laws and constitution, the use of all his own powers for his own welfare, has not therefore the slightest kinship with the spurious liberty of doing as we please, but is the prime condition of happy life in human society. The thing to which it has generally been sacrificed in the past has been "the reason of state"; that is, some other object than the happiness of men, an object selected and im-

posed upon the society by some arbitrary political authority. There is a modern abuse which is exactly parallel to this, and which consists in using the law to impose pet social aims on society, which use up the time and energy of the citizens in other aims than those chosen by themselves for their own happiness. Thus the most difficult problem in respect to liberty under law is now what it has always been, to prevent the law from overgrowing and smothering liberty.

Liberty and Discipline

The proposition that "every man should be free to do as he likes, without encroaching on the similar liberty of every other man," is commonly used as if it were a a simple and final definition of social and civil liberty. It is not so, however. It is only one of those formulas which we get into the habit of using because they save us the trouble of thinking, not because they are real solutions. Evidently any two men might easily disagree as to the limits set by this formula to their respective spheres of right and liberty — if so they would quarrel and fight. Law, peace, and order would not therefore be guaranteed; that is to say, the problem would not be solved.

Civil liberty must therefore be an affair of positive law, of institutions, and of history. It varies from time to time, for the notion of rights is constantly in flux. The limiting line between the rights and duties of each man, up to which each may go without trenching on the same rights and liberty of others, must be defined at any moment of time by the constitution, laws, and institutions of the community. People often deny this, and revolt at it, because they say that one's notions of rights and

liberty are not set for him by the laws of the state. The first man you meet will undoubtedly tell you that there are a number of laws now in force in the United States which he does not think are consistent with liberty and (natural) rights — I who write this would say so of laws restricting immigration, laying protective taxes, etc. But it is to be observed that behind the positive law existing at any time, there is the moral reflection of the community which is at work all the time. This is the field of study, debate, and reflection, on which moral convictions are constantly being formed; and when they are formed, they find their way into laws, constitutions, and institutions, provided that the political institutions are free, so as to allow this to take place. If not, there is opened a gap between the positive law and the moral convictions of the people, and social convulsions ensue. It is a constant phenomenon of all exaggerated philosophers of the state, that they obscure this distinction between public morals and positive law. The older abuse was to suppress public morals in the name of positive law; the later abuse is to introduce public morals into positive law directly and immaturely.

If now we turn to individual liberty, still it is true that all liberty is under law. The whole life of man is under law — it is impossible to conceive of it otherwise. It is impossible to understand society except we think of it as held and governed by forces which maintain equilibrium in it, just as we have learned to conceive of nature. The objections which are made to this notion are exactly parallel to those which were formerly brought against the same conception of physics, and it is impossible to argue against them, because, if they were true, there would be no thinking or arguing possible. If social science deals only with matters of expediency,

then there is no social science. It is a question of expediency whether there shall be two Houses in the Legislature or one; whether the Cabinet ministers shall have seats in Congress; whether men shall work ten hours a day or eight; whether we should use more or less paper money inside the requirement of the country; whether university education should be based on Greek; whether women should have the suffrage; and so on. If all the questions of social science are of this nature, there is no social science; there is nothing to find out. All that can be said is: "Go on and try it"; and the people who have "views" may be listened to if they show what they think to be the advantages of one or another arrangement.

In truth, however, the field of expediency is very circumscribed. It is surrounded by the domain of forces, so that when we seem most free to adopt such plans as we please, we find ourselves actually controlled by facts in the nature of man and of the earth, and we find that it is the sum of our wisdom to find out those facts and to range ourselves under them and in obedience to them. Then our science and our art have their proper places and fall into due relation to each other.

Thus we come to this: that there is no liberty for the intelligent man as an individual, or in voluntary co-operation with others, except in intelligent obedience to the laws of right living. His first task is to know the world in which he finds himself. He must work and he must study. He is not turned out to riot in self-indulgence because he is free; he must conform to the conditions in which he finds himself. He must obey. When he has broken all the bonds of old institutions, of superstition and human tyranny, he wakes to find that he can have no liberty unless he subdues himself; labor and self-control are the conditions of welfare. He must not

cry out that liberty is only a delusion and a juggle; he must understand that what liberty properly means for the individual, is intelligent acceptance of the conditions of earthly life, conformity to them, and manful effort to make life a success under them.

Not to follow this line of thought into the domain of private morals, I turn back to the relation of individual liberty to civil liberty. Civil and political liberty cannot release a man from state burdens. It is interesting and instructive to notice that free yeomen in the United States have to take up, of their own accord, many of those burdens which, in the Middle Ages, were regarded as the heaviest feudal obligations. The farmers in a New England township have to maintain roads and bridges, do police duty, and maintain all public institutions as much as if they lived upon a manor. A farmer who works out his taxes on a road does not know how near he comes to reproducing a mediæval villain. The burdens are there, because society is there; and they must be borne. If the state does them on a larger scale than the township, then they must be paid for; and when we see men eager to work them out if they can, we must infer that the burden is increased, not lessened, by being turned into taxes.

When the peasant obtains freedom, therefore, and sets up a democratic republic, he finds that that means only that he must turn about and do again voluntarily, as an intelligent citizen, what he did before under human compulsion. When he gets self-government, he finds that it still means government; only that now it is turned into personal discipline instead of being governmental compulsion. If he gets his personal liberty, then civil liberty is nothing but a guarantee that, in doing his best to learn the laws of right living and to obey them, to the

end that his life may be a success, no one else shall be allowed to interfere with him or to demand a share in the product of his efforts. That is what the function of the state is; and if it does more or less it fails of its function.

Discipline, therefore, is the great need of our time. It should be the first object of education. By it we mean something much more than the mental training about which we used to hear so much. We mean training of thought, feeling, and emotions, so as to apprehend and appreciate all things correctly; and habits of self-control so as to hold one's self within the limits which enable free men in a free society to live in harmony and pursue their ends successfully without encroaching on each other. Our children need it. Their freedom and fearlessness give them spirit and courage; but they lack form and training — they would not be any less free if they were considerably chastened. We need it as parents; we should discharge our responsibilities in that relationship much better if we were schooled to more patience and to more rational methods of exercising authority or instruction. We need it in social relations, because it is only by virtue of discipline that men can co-operate with each other. The notion that co-operation is a power which can take the place of the intelligence of well-trained men, is itself a product and proof of undisciplined thinking. Men increase their power indefinitely by co-operation and organization; but in order to co-operate they must make concessions. The prime condition is concord, and it is only disciplined men who are capable of attaining to that. It has often been said that men have to surrender their liberty in order to organize; but it is better stated that they gain new power consistently with liberty by organizing. We

need better discipline in science, at least in social science. There is a great luxuriance in the production of "views" and notions in this field; and the greatest need is of a set of guarantees and criteria by which this exuberance could be trimmed down. There is one set of persons whose liberty would certainly gain by the production of such tests and guarantees, *viz.*, those who are now likely to have to pay the expense of all the social speculation which is on foot, if any of it should be put to experiment. We need more discipline in public affairs. Our freedom would lose nothing if it were more sober, and if a great many abuses which the law cannot reach were more under the ban of public opinion.

Thus liberty in a free state, and for intelligent men, is limited, first by responsibility, and second by discipline.

Liberty and Property

M. de Laveleye says: "Property is the essential complement of liberty. Without property man is not truly free." It will be worth while, taking this dictum as a text, to unravel it and distinguish its elements of truth and falsehood; for it is as pretty a specimen as could well be found of the sort of social philosophy in which confusion of terms and unclearness of thinking set apothegms in circulation which easily pass as the profoundest wisdom, when they are really null, or, still worse, are true or false just as you take them.

The specimen before us may mean either of two things. It may mean that every man has a right to be, and expects to be, a free man, that to be such he must have some property, and that, therefore, the authority which is responsible for securing him his freedom is bound to see to it that he gets some property; or, it may mean

that freedom is a thing which every man should seek to win and acquire, that it is not possible to acquire it without property, and that, therefore, every sober, industrious, and socially ambitious man should properly seek to get property. Which of these two does the proposition mean? By its terms it is impossible to decide. It is a proposition which two persons might understand and employ at the same time in the two opposite senses with perfect good faith, and thereby lay the foundation for a "social discussion" of great magnitude, the only fruit of which would be to find out at last how they had misunderstood each other from the beginning. We have seen numerous instances of this kind and it can hardly be disputed that the propositions which admit of such differences of interpretation are extremely mischievous.

If the proposition is taken in the former sense, the notion of a "free man" is taken to be something simple and definite, which can be made the basis of deductions, and upon which obligations of social duty can be constructed, aimed especially at the state, which guarantees liberty as a political right. Property then becomes a right of the individual, in his relation with society or the state. He would not forfeit this right to have property unless he should get some property by his own effort — if he did that he would fall under the "duties of wealth," the first of which, as we learn from current discussion, is to subscribe to or contribute the fund by which the state makes others free.

If the proposition is taken in the latter sense, the notion of a free man cannot be set up *a priori*. A free man is such a man as results under the limitation of earthly life, when he has individual and social power sufficient to bear up against the difficulties which harass us here. The proposition would then say that no man

can do this without property — property would, therefore, be a duty, not a right. A man could not lay claims to it against anybody else; he would be bound to produce it from his own energy, and by the use of his own resources. Property would, therefore, arise in the social organization from the obligation of every man to pay his way in the body of which he is a member, and to carry the burden of others for whom he is responsible — first of all, of his wife and children. It would not arise, as under the first interpretation, from the fact that he needs something which he has not.

According to these two interpretations, the proposition contains neither one nor the other of the two great philosophies which are now in dispute on the social domain. They might, in fact, be defined as affirming, one, that property is a right of him who has it not and a duty of him who has it, looking always simply at the distribution of that which is; the other, that property is a right of him who has it, and a duty of him who has it not, *viz.*, a duty to work and produce some.

We need not stop for any long discussion of the definition of property, for it does not seem to be involved in the issue before us. By property I mean the sum of things which serve the wants of men, and the appropriation of which to individual use and enjoyment is assured by the power of society. Such, also, seems to be the sense in which the word is taken in the passage quoted, so that we are at least free from the constant confusion between property, the metaphysical notion of property, the right of property, and the moral justification of property. The author of this thesis has not, therefore, a balloon at hand, so that when he is beaten on the ground he can take to the clouds. The property which a man needs to make him free is food, clothes, shelter, and fuel

to release him from the slavery of want. These are material things, goods, wealth, products of labor and capital, objects of appropriation, sources of exclusive satisfaction to him who consumes them on himself; they are therefore objects of strife, occasions of crime, definitions of *meum* and *tuum*, things about which law turns, chief subjects of the moral law, leading facts in the history of civilization, having their origin far back before it was sufficiently developed to leave traces which we can follow. That is what is meant by property when it is said that without property a man cannot be free, no matter which interpretation we give to that proposition.

One of the best mediæval scholars of this century, Guerard, wrote: "Liberty and property entered the hut of the serf together"; "Liberty and property increased together and justified each other"; and he often repeats statements to the same effect. Another scholar, Pigeonneau, has written that in the boroughs which were built up around the seats of bishops, princes, and abbots, commerce created wealth, and wealth created liberty. The history of the Middle Ages, when studied objectively and not romantically, fully sustains these dicta. The history of modern civilization from the ninth and eleventh centuries, about which these writers were speaking, down to the present time, reveals the course by which liberty and property have been developed together; but at the same time it reveals that they have grown together only when property has been secure, and the right of property has been strictly maintained, and that nothing has ever been more fatal to liberty than socialistic abuse of property.

In the view of liberty which I have tried to present, liberty is a conquest. It does not lie at the beginning

of history and of the struggle of the human race on this earth; it lies at the end of it, and it is one of the richest and finest fruits of civilization. We should not, therefore, if we gave up civilization, fall back into permanent rest in the primeval state of "natural liberty"; we should, on the contrary, lose liberty, if we lost civilization. It is liberty which is unstable and always in jeopardy, and which can be maintained only by virtue and diligence. The two great means by which men have won liberty in the course of civilization have been property and knowledge; whenever the distribution of property has been arbitrarily interfered with, either because the state became too strong or too weak, liberty has declined. Civilization has not always suffered, because, as in the formation of the great states, under certain circumstances, civilization might win, although liberty was arrested — civilization will win any time at the expense of liberty, if discipline and coercion are necessary to the security of property. Therefore the truth is that liberty and property go together, and sustain each other in a glorious accord, but only in the highest and best civilization which men have yet attained; and to maintain them both together, or to maintain that order of society in which they are consonant and co-operative, is a task which mankind has never yet succeeded in accomplishing save in a most imperfect way.

The serf first obtained chattels and then land in property; on them he won his first power, and that meant his first liberty — meaning thereby his personal liberty. His title to these things, that is, his right to appropriate them to his own exclusive use and enjoyment, and to be sustained by the power of the state in so doing, was his first step in civil liberty. It was by this movement that he ceased to be a serf. This movement has

produced the great middle class of modern times; and the elements in it have been property, science, and liberty. The first and chief of these, however, is property; there is no liberty without property, because there is nothing else without property on this earth. How can any one dispute this who will think for a moment that property means food and shelter — the first things necessary that we may exist at all; and that we use the word property rather than wealth or goods when we mean to refer to their appropriation to the exclusive use of individuals? Therefore liberty and property are not inseparable, and if they are separated it is property which is fundamental and permanent, and not liberty.

Hence the proposition which we undertook to examine does not bear analysis well. The dictum that no man can be free without property is entirely true or false as we construe it one way or another. Freedom and property, I say, are not inseparable, and if they are separated, it is liberty and not property which is the adjunct. If they are united, they do not simply coalesce, but their combination belongs to a new and higher order of civilization, calling for new social knowledge and for wisdom to maintain it.

Liberty and Opportunity

Among popular beliefs whose existence is manifested in current discussion and which ought not to pass unchallenged, is the notion that a chance in life is a positive and certain gain or advance. A chance, however, is a chance, and nothing more. Every chance involves a possibility of two opposite issues. If a chance or opportunity is used one way it results in gain or advantage; if it is used the other way it issues in loss or disadvantage. A

chance, therefore, has no moral quality or value; the moral question is: what will be done with it? Hence the fallacy of all the captivating suggestions about ethics in economic or other strictly impersonal social forces. The moral relations are in the personal domain.

Capital has no moral quality; it is a chance, a power, an opportunity. Capital means tools, weapons, food, etc. A pistol has no moral quality; it can be used for good or for ill, as men count good and ill. The same may be said of an axe, a spade, or a locomotive; it may also be said of food, for a man possessing a store of energy derived from food may spend it in benefit or in mischief. Food furnishes energy to a laborer or a murderer indifferently; the morals are in the man, not in the bread; they go with the intelligence, or with the intelligent responsibility, and turn on the question: what will he do with it?

All capital, therefore, is power; it furnishes a chance to do something. It brings with itself, however, the double possibility as to the use to which it will be put. The man who has tools, weapons, or food, is able to accomplish far more in any direction in which he determines to apply it than the man who has no capital; but then the question how he will use it has become so much the more serious; his power for mischief is enhanced just as much as his power for good. As to himself, the chance is no less serious; he has power to make far more of himself than if destitute of capital, and he has power to hurry himself to personal ruin and destruction so much the faster.

The same may be said of education. The moralists have never been satisfied with the old adage that knowledge is power. They felt the lack of the moral element in it, that is to say, they felt the lack of the element

which it was their business to supply. The adage, however, was true; knowledge is power, and, in itself considered, it is nothing more. The notion that knowledge makes men good is one of the superstitions of the nineteenth century. Knowledge only gives men power and it furnishes a chance; it brings with it, however, the grim alternative already cited: will the man who has it use it for good or for ill? That is a moral question. It finds its answer in the springs of character, and the independent self-determination which lies deepest in the essential elements of each man's personality. This, by the way, is one of the reasons why there is no sound social or personal strength which is not founded on the training of the individual; it is the reason why individual character is the spring of all good in man or the state, and why all socialism is profoundly immoral. Wherever collective standards, codes, ideals, and motives take the place of individual responsibility, we know from ample experience that the spontaneity and independent responsibility which are essential to moral vigor are sure to be lost.

The things which men call "goods," therefore, because they are means or powers, are not positive gains; they only open the lists and give the chance for a struggle.

Leaving the matter of morals now, and turning back to the practical utilities for which men value all "goods," we find that every chance which is opened means gain or loss according to the wisdom with which it is employed. Very few men of fifty can look back on their lives and see anything but chances misapprehended, opportunities lost, and errors in the use of powers. It is simply a wild speculation to guess what a hundred men would attain to if they should correctly understand and use every opportunity in life which opened before them,

and should exploit it to the utmost of which it was capable without any mistake. The suggestion of such a thing will suffice to show how far we are from anything of the sort. It is said that the great reason why savage tribes remain in their low state is that they cannot keep what they gain and use it to get more, but are constantly slipping back and beginning over again, but in truth, the most civilized societies are only slightly better. Methodical, regular, and rhythmical progress is a dream as yet.

There is a new and useful line of work yet to be opened which will consist in an examination of biography, as a comparative and analytical study, in order to note and generalize the conditions of successful use of opportunity, and to perceive the effects of opportunity misunderstood or abused. An opportunity missed may be a mere negative loss, but an opportunity abused becomes a cause of positive harm or of ruin. The career of every man who wins distinction affords ample proof of all phases of these observations, because opportunities present themselves over and over again. Every time that an opportunity presents itself a new decision must be made, and the perils of mistake must be incurred again. Like every other social fact, this one also is intensified in our time. Our fathers attained to routine which was adequate for all the opportunities or chances which came to them, and they were able to generalize rules which embody "the good old way," and were in fact in those days correct and adequate wisdom; but we cannot live that way if we would. The rules do not hold; the cases are more various; the elements are all the time changing, or at least recombining. If a man makes a correct judgment once, that is more likely to lead him astray the next time, because he will have con-

fidence in his experience and will not note the differences in the cases. Throughout the business world this observation forces itself on our attention.

I have gathered these observations together in order to lead up to a more correct apprehension, as I think, of the purpose and achievement which we have a right to expect from civilization. Civilization does nothing but open chances. It does nothing to guarantee their advantageous effect. Between the chance and its effect lies the all-important question: what will he do with it? Personal liberty is nothing but a name for a series of chances, or for a life to which chances have access; civil liberty is nothing but social security for such use of the chances, within the limits which are set by the criminal law, as the subject of them sees fit to make. Neither affords any security that the use will be a wise one or that it will issue in a result which the individual will later regard with satisfaction. If he gets his liberty he must take his responsibility; for he may be assured that if he finds any one else to take the responsibility, he will speedily lose the liberty and with it the chances.

The sanctions of virtue and wisdom are, therefore, all the time increasing, and above all they are all the time increasing for the mass of mankind. It must be reiterated over and over again, that it is the greatest of all delusions to suppose that we can make what we call gains without meeting with attendant ills. The added power which mankind has won within a century or two brings with it all the peril of the alternative which has been described for each of us and for our society. We take the new powers and opportunities at the peril of correctly understanding them and using them. If the masses are to take the social power, they will have to look to themselves how they use it. No revolution in

social order has ever been brought about by the oppression, or folly, or wickedness of the rulers — if such things as that could cause revolutions there would be little else but revolution in history. Revolutions have been caused by holding out hopes of bliss which the ruling powers were not able to bring to pass. Democracy will take power subject to the same penalty; it must wield power under the same conditions. So far it has been lavish with its promises and has had no responsibility because it has only been applied in new countries where there were no hard social problems. It has, in general, promised not that men should have more chances, but that they should realize greater fulfilment of what their hearts desire with less need of study, training, and labor. I hold that that is the very opposite of the truth, and that all the new social movements, including democratic political institutions, demand, and demand especially of the masses, painstaking, knowledge, philosophical power, and labor far beyond what has ever hitherto been necessary. The reason for this opinion is in the fact that the latest social movements have issued in increase of social power, and that all such increase involves an alternative which can be successfully solved only by added mental and moral power, and by more work.

Liberty and Labor

We are told that the justification of labor "is to be found in the imperfection of human nature." It betrays a singular state of mind with regard to social phenomena to talk about the "justification of labor" — the justification of labor is that we cannot live without it; we might as well discuss the justification of breathing, or of existence itself. It is idleness which needs justifica-

tion. It is also singular that anybody should find satisfaction in giving definitions to labor, poverty, etc., from which one can argue that labor and poverty may be brought to an end; thus it is said that labor is the pain of doing what one does not know how to do, so that it may be rendered non-existent by acquiring skill. This is what the Germans call "fighting a mirror." It is only literary sleight-of-hand. Labor remains just what it always was — a pitiless fact, an inevitable necessity. A man who has capital on which he can live without work is living on past labor accumulated and reapplied. There is no way in which one of the sons of men can live without labor except by enslaving some of his fellowmen to work for him. Therefore the essence of personal and civil liberty must be found in a state of things in which each one labors for himself, is secured against laboring for any one else, and is assured the enjoyment of the fruits of his own labor. Civil liberty, when considered by itself, must consist in such laws and institutions as secure an equilibrium of rights and duties, and allow no privileges to arise on one side and no servitudes on the other.

Labor is all expenditure of human energy, by which the sustentation of society is carried on. It is expenditure of human energy, and never can be anything else. Therefore, it wears men out and consumes them. In a limited measure, and, in youth, for a limited time, it may be pleasurable, but, as it is sure to surpass the limits of degree or the limits of time as a man grows old, it is certain to be an oppression and destruction to the individual, against which his will must revolt and under which his happiness must be sacrificed, because his physical powers are sure to decay while yet his will is strong to wish and to undertake. The "sustentation of soci-

ety" is also the purpose of labor, because the individual earns his living, in modern civilized society, by holding a place and bearing a share in the collective enterprise of the whole.

It is in vain now that we attempt anywhere in this domain to reduce the notion of liberty to something positive or hard and fast; it presents itself to us as a set of dissolving views, which are forever changing with the changing aspects of social relations as they go on their course of evolution. The state by its power frees men from anarchy, fist-law, slavery, etc., but it imposes a new set of restraints of its own, which take away liberty on another side. The state is necessary for the first function; it must be tolerated in the second. There would be no rest, no finality, except when each one had everything at no cost, or with no offsets and attendant ills. This, therefore, is the true Utopia, the true social ideal, and a great many have recognized it and begun to proclaim it, who have not yet formulated or understood it.

It is an instructive fact that modern methods of poor relief and modern poor laws grew up as slavery, serfdom, and villainage passed away. A slave could never be a vagabond or a pauper; he could not starve to death unless there was a general collapse of the entire social order, so that his master could neither feed him nor find a purchaser for him. The most ingenious apologies for slavery ever made in this country consisted in developing this fact into an argument that slavery was the only cure for socialism, the only sound organization of society in which there could be no poverty, and that free society was destined to destruction by the war of competition and unchecked struggle for existence within itself. A great deal of the socialistic declamation which

we hear meets this argument on a completely even footing and concedes all its effect; the declaimers do not see it, because they have not thought out the matter as well as the old slaveholders had. In fact, there is an indisputable element of truth in it, which is this: liberty of labor is not a social finality. It is not a definitive solution of the social organization, but only alters the forms of the problems; it alters nothing of the social forces. It sets free some personal interests which were not free before, and in so far it adds to the internal warfare and confusion of society. It does sharpen and intensify the competition of life. The struggle of the forces rises in intensity, develops more and more heat, puts stronger and stronger strain upon political institutions, subjects the sober sense, the high self-control of men to severer tests, demands more intelligent power of criticizing dogmas and projects. The men who supposed that, under liberty, they were going to soar away from irksome limitations of earthly life, find that, though the restraints have changed their form, they are as heavy as ever.

The master of a slave or serf secured the subject person against all the grossest calamities of human life; but he made the slave pay him a high insurance rate for that security. The master carried all personal and social risk for the slave. This element of risk is one of the leading phenomena of social organization. In a barbarous society, where there is scarcely any organization, each person carries it for himself, and it produces no social problem, because, so long as it turns out well for the individual, he makes no complaint. When it goes against him he perishes. It is with advancing organization that the risk element becomes distinctly differentiated, becomes an element of status or contract,

and enters into the rights and duties of the parties as they are related to one another in the organization.

It is one of the few things which are, I believe, agreed upon by all, that it is the function of capital to carry the time delay, and to bear the risk; it is an interesting question, however, whether the laborer has to pay the employer for carrying the risk. Lasalle demanded that the employee should be admitted to a share in the risk, because it is, as he assumed, only through the risk that the great gains come, and, therefore, on that view, the employee, if excluded from the risk, had no chance of the great gains.

The wages system is undoubtedly a high and intense organization, involving strict discipline upon all its members, employers as well as employees. It is therefore an intense constraint upon personal liberty. Some of the phrase-makers wax indignant at the notion that the laborer is viewed and treated "as a ware;" such indignation serves easily the purposes of rhetoric and declamation, but, in the cold light of fact and reason, it is only ludicrous. The Greeks called a laborer an "ensouled machine," which may be regarded as a more or a less offensive figure of speech than the other, but neither of them is anything else than a figure of speech. Such figures aside, the fact is that the laborer binds himself by a contract: his time and service are the subject matter of the contract, which binds his liberty. The employer is also bound by a contract: he is bound to furnish means of subsistence, according to the terms of the contract, whether the enterprise in which he and the laborers are jointly engaged is successful or not. Every man who earns his living is bound in contracts of this sort; employers and laborers, as we use those words technically, are only special cases. Our whole organization is held

together by contracts, and we are all "wares," if anybody is. If the name is offensive, we may change it to some other, but we shall all stand just where we do now, *viz.*, under the necessity of subjecting our individual wills and preferences, that is, our liberty, to the conditions of the contracts by which we hold our places in the organization. The term "labor" cannot be taken in any narrower sense than that of contributions of any kind to the work of society, and, in that sense, we see that when we labor we set aside our liberty for the sake of some other good which we consider worth more to us under the circumstances.

The advantages of the wages system are that the man who has nothing makes a contract which throws the risk on capital, and is able, reckoning on a fixed and secure income, to make plans for the accumulation of capital under his circumstances, whatever they are, without any element of speculation. The defects of the wages system appear in so far as the wages income is not fixed and secure, and in so far as the laborer does, in fact, find himself involved in the business risk. I am of the opinion that the path of improvement and reform lies in the perfection of the wages system in these respects, and not in any of the pet notions which are propounded for supplanting the wages system by some other.

Therefore we find that in the historical development of the industrial organization there have been, in the forms and modes of laboring and of combining ourselves for greater power in supplying human wants, changes in status and relation, but that the necessity of working for a living has been and is a thraldom from which there is no escape. The century which has seen slavery as an institution cease to exist almost throughout the whole human race, has easily come to believe in an ideal state

of things in which existence should cost no pain or self-denial at all. Emancipation provided that a man should work only for himself. It is very evident that many are enraged, and declare liberty all a delusion, because they had persuaded themselves that liberty meant emancipation from the need of working at all, or emancipation from all the hardships of the struggle for existence. Hence the denunciations of "wages slavery." But we have seen that liberty is not, and never can be, anything but an affair of social institutions, limited by their scope, and never reaching into any field of poetry or enthusiasm. It can never make toil cease to be painful or sacrifice cease to be irksome; it can never be enthroned above contracts as a regulator of the relations which are necessitated by the social organization, because it is on the same plane with contracts and exists only by and in connection with them. There could never have been any abolition of slavery and serfdom but by capital. The rise and development of capital have forced higher and more stringent organization; and this means new and in some respects more irksome restraints on individual liberty, in order to acquire greater power and win more ample sustenance for society. The socialist program consists in resolving that we demand the liberty we dreamed of and the easy security we used to have and all the new capital and wealth, while we declare that we will work only eight hours a day for it and will not study for it at all.

Does Labor Brutalize?

Those who live a hundred years from now will doubtless see strange results from a period in which men discuss their own position on earth not by facts but by

ideals. To start from an ideal of what one thinks, judging by his own tastes, that a man of moral "elevation" ought to be, in order to find out what must be true in regard to man's position on earth and what laws we ought to pass, is a mode of proceeding which may easily be popular, but is silly beyond any folly which human philosophy has ever perpetrated. It is evident from the simplest observation that men are always under compulsion to do the best they can under the circumstances so as to attain as nearly as possible to the ends they choose. The whole philosophy of existence, and the entire wisdom of policy, either in individual or common action, is bounded by the terms of this proposition; therefore the field of study and effort is in the understanding and modification of the circumstances and in the intelligent choice of the ends. The field of speculation which embraces imaginary conditions is a field of folly.

A man who works twelve hours a day may do it because he likes it, or because he hopes by it to accomplish something which he thinks will bring to him an adequate reward; but most probably he does it because he does not know how else to meet the demands which are made on him, as he admits, legitimately, or with an authority which he cannot repel. I once heard the question put to one of the most learned scholars of this century, whether he liked to work all the time. He answered: "What difference does it make whether I like it or not? I can never finish what I have to do anyway." No serf ever worked as persistently, enthusiastically, and restlessly as that man did. It is time to stop this insulting talk about labor as if nobody labored but a hod-carrier or a bricklayer; the hardest worked classes in the community are those who are their own

bosses. Therefore I distinctly include the latter in what I have to say about labor.

It is one of the pet phrases of modern times that labor is dignified or has dignity. It is a good, safe phrase, because it sounds well, and the people for whose consumption it is provided cannot tell whether it makes any difference whether labor has dignity or not, or what would happen if it was not dignified. In truth, dignity is just what labor does not possess; for it always forces a man into strained posture, ungraceful motions, dirt, perspiration, disorder of dress and manner. It is leisure which has dignity. Moreover, if any man, no matter who he might be, was without dinner, he would undoubtedly pocket his dignity and go to work to get one.

Just how the current phrase took this form I do not know; but, although it is somewhat ludicrous when strictly analyzed, it has a history behind it which makes it anything but ludicrous. It is only in the most recent times, and then only in limited circles, that the notion has been rejected that labor is degrading. The intention of the phrase that labor is noble, or is dignified, was to contradict that traditional opinion or sentiment. In the classical states the sentiment was universal and undisputed, that manual labor in itself, and any labor when prosecuted for pay, was degrading; personal services which involved touching the person of another were also regarded as especially demeaning to him who performed them. If bread and butter were obtained in return for social functions performed, it must be disguised in some form of honorarium; it would dishonor a man to take wages. The only honorable forms of effort were fighting, ruling, and ecclesiastical functions. This is the militant theory of the comparative worth of social functions; it proceeds logically and properly

from the standpoint of fighting men as the predominant and most important class in the community.

We have to thank the commanding influence of classicalism in our modern education for the strength which this tradition still has in the modern world. It has less weight in the United States than anywhere else in the world; but it must be borne in mind that the United States constitute the first human society of any importance in which other notions have ever prevailed or have ever been generally professed. An American will be sure to be astonished, on the continent of Europe, by the scruples and mannerisms with which professional men surround the acceptance of the remuneration which they are quite as eager to get as any Yankee; it looks as if they were ashamed of their livelihood, or felt themselves lowered by taking what they have fairly earned. It is not worth while to seek such evidence of the remnants of the same sentiment as one could find among ourselves.

The feudal period produced a new and still more intense development of the same sentiment in a somewhat changed form. All the industrial forms of livelihood were regarded as servile in comparison with the functions of the fighting classes and their ecclesiastical allies. The learned class were on the line between, unless they sought ecclesiastical rank, or, later, as legists, made themselves independently necessary.

It is only very slowly that the notions of an industrial and commercial civilization have fought their way during the last five hundred years against the militant notions. The latter have had and still largely retain the aroma of aristocracy; therefore, they are affected by many who do not understand them. The dictum that labor is noble, or dignified, has been a watchword of industrial-

ism in its struggle to assert itself against militancy; but the industrial classes, as fast as they have attained wealth, have deserted industrialism to seek alliance with aristocracy, or to adopt the modes of life which the militant tradition marks as more honorable.

The revolt against the notion that some forms of useful service to society are in themselves more worthy than others, is as yet, therefore, by no means complete. The so-called labor movement is full of evidence that the old notions still prevail in the manual labor classes; that those classes do not themselves heartily believe in the dignity of labor; that they are not proud of their own social functions; that they have been imbued by their leaders, not with honorable self-respect and a spirit of determination to vindicate their own worth in the social body, but only with enough vague aspiration to produce an irritated sense of inferiority. The socialistic movement bears strongest evidence to the strength of the old traditions; the assertions of fact from which it starts, in respect to the position, relations, rights, and wrongs of classes, are all obtained by applying the feudal traditions to the existing situation. The socialists by no means urge that the hod-carrier and the statesman in existing society shall be regarded as performing functions each in his way useful to society and both equally honorable if performed with equal fidelity. That is the bourgeois and capitalistic doctrine. The socialists assume that the two are not now equally worthy in popular esteem or social weight, or, consequently, in industrial fact, and they assert that the existing order must be changed so as to make them equal, not in worth, but in the personal enjoyment which can be won from the social functions and in the ideals of humanity which can be attained through them.

I have before me an article produced by this discussion, but belonging, not to the socialist or semi-socialist but to the sentimental school, in which it is affirmed that manual or operative labor is brutalizing. This is in direct contradiction with the doctrine that labor is ennobling, which is what the sentimentalists have been telling us for a century. The contrast which the writer has in mind is between manual or factory labor and labor with a larger intellectual element in it; he seeks to establish his contention by describing the long factory hours, the close confinement, the irksome constraint, etc. What, then, shall we infer? Is the sweet doctrine that labor is dignified and ennobling all wrong? Were the ancients right? Is labor for pay always degrading, and does it become worse and worse as we go down the grades from those occupations which have the most brain-work and least manual work to those which have the most manual work and least brain-work? The issue is clear and it is not difficult; it would do great good to solve it completely, for it would clear up our ideas on many topics which are at present in confusion.

I maintain that labor has no moral quality at all. Every function in social work which is useful to society is just as meritorious in every way as any other; each being suitable and an object of choice to the person who performs it. The moral quality depends on the way in which it is performed. The social estimate and the personal worth which should be ascribed to social functions depends on the way in which the man we have in mind does his duty. It is not capable of generalization, and there is no reason for generalizing it.

The educational value of different social functions is equal, and the degree of human perfection which can be got out of them is equal. It develops a man in all moral

excellence, and in all that vague "elevation" which plays such a prominent part in social speculation just as much to be a good and faithful hod-carrier as to be a good and faithful statesman.

Labor does not brutalize — the distinction between manual and other labor in this respect is invalid. The people who are accustomed to factory work are not conscious of the hardships which a literary man may easily imagine that they must feel in it, any more than other men are conscious of hardship in the confinement of the editorial sanctum or the laboratory. It is only in literature or in the semi-loafer class that we find people actually reflecting and moralizing and complaining about whether the way in which they get their living is irksome. It is overwork which is brutalizing, and it is immaterial whether it is manual or intellectual work; but, as I said at the beginning, it is rarely that a man who is really overworked is in a position to say freely whether he will submit to it and be brutalized or not. Probably that is the reason why so few of that class pay any attention to the discussion, or ever make any complaint.

Liberty and Machinery

A great deal of stress is often laid on the assumed fact that men who labor, at least in manual occupations, are paid for their nerve and sinew, and inferences are deduced from this assertion of fact which are believed to establish especial hardship for that class of persons.

I am not able to find any case whatever, at the present time, in which a human being is paid for anything but intelligence. It may be that some one can bring forward a case; if so, I should be interested to see it. Any mere exertion of animal energy can be converted into

pounds of coal, and can be supplanted by steam. The limitations and conditions are, however, that the task to be done must present uniform requirements over a considerable extent of time or place, so that it may be economically possible to apply machinery without intelligence. Some examples will make this point clear.

We see men employed in shoveling and carrying coal from the side-walk into the cellar. Are they paid for pure energy, or for intelligence? If it was the fact that the coal-bins of all houses were built in the same shape and in the same position relatively to the sidewalk, then coal carts could be fitted with apparatus for passing the coal into the bin without any shoveling or carrying. In fact, carts have been invented, and are in use, which do this in that great number of cases where the position and shape of the bins conform to a general plan of house construction. Or, if coal had to be put into the cellar every few days, apparatus could be arranged for each house, in spite of differences of construction, to put it in without hand labor. In fact, therefore, at the present time, the services of the coal-heavers are required to adapt the task to the varying circumstances of the different cases; that is, to apply intelligence where it cannot be dispensed with.

Another case, familiar to our notice, in which human beings expend much nerve and muscular energy, is in hod-carrying. Steam hod-hoisters are familiar, but it is obvious that their applicability and utility is limited to the cases where a large building is to be constructed at one spot; otherwise it does not pay to put up the apparatus. Therefore the case is that the task can be reduced to routine and machinery can be applied to it, if the amount of it is sufficient, within the limits of time and space, to give the machine simply machine work to

do, namely, the plodding repetition of a set operation. In other cases the man does the work because he must use his intelligence all the time to produce the ever-changing application which is called for.

A steam shovel will transfer sand or gravel from the bank at a rate to defy the competition of men, so long as the task is to transfer it in the same way, or within narrow limits; but a machine to apply steam-power to the excavation of a trench for a sewer, through hard soil and under constantly varying conditions, is hardly imaginable. Here, therefore, we find the human power almost unrivaled.

On the other hand, we find in mills and factories machines which, as the saying is, "can almost talk." They perform very complicated operations with perfection, provided only the task is to be repeated without limit of time, in some process of manufacture. Hence the machines and the power are all the time invading the domain of intelligence, wherever the task can be put in the mechanical form, and made to comply with the mechanical conditions; the man stands by and supplies the intelligence at the points where the intelligence is still indispensable. Some machines seem more intelligent than some men, but no machine can "feed itself" with new material. The operations of the machine are often immeasurably more worthy of intelligence than the operation of going after more material and feeding it into the machine, but not always so; for the arrangement of the machine and the material, that the machine may do its work well, is often no trifling demand on intelligence.

I believe, therefore, that it is a correct statement of the case that, where the task calls for brute force only, the steam or other engine supplants the man, and that

where the man holds the field because his intelligence is indispensable, it is his intelligence that is paid for. If it is indispensable, it is also well remunerated in proportion to the time and capital which must be spent in preparing for the task, while great physical vigor, if necessary, helps to make a natural monopoly. This is why the modern laborer constantly turns to demand the help of machinery wherever it can possibly be applied, and the notion is finding especial illustration just now in the case of the stokers in modern steamships of high speed. Either machinery must be applied where machinery hardly seems applicable at all, or the men who bring the requisite intelligence to bear under very hard conditions, together with the mere mechanical energy whose market value is that of a few pounds of the coal they handle, will obtain a remuneration indefinitely greater than that of the general class or workmen to which they belong, or with which they have hitherto been classed.

Whether this view of the matter can be maintained as absolutely correct or not, it certainly has enough truth in it to show that the current assertions about the hapless position of the man who "has only his labor to sell" rest upon very superficial and hasty knowledge of the case.

On the one hand, then, it is true that that man is unfortunate who, in the world of steam and machinery, can do nothing which steam and machinery cannot do; but, on the other hand, it is true also that steam and machinery are a grand emancipation for the man who will raise himself above them and learn to use them by his intelligence.

If I apprehend this matter aright, then it is only another case of a general principle which I have already tried to expound: that every new power is a new chance,

but that every chance brings with it a twofold possibility. If we seize it and use it rightly, we go up by means of it; if we fail to understand it, or miss it, or abuse it, we fall just so much lower on account of it. If we live in a world of machinery and steam, and cannot learn to command machinery and steam, we shall count for no more than a handful of coal; if we rise to the occasion, and by work and study make steam and machinery our servants, we can be emancipated from drudgery and from the wear of the nerves and the muscles. The true hardship of our time is that this alternative is forced upon us over and over again with pitiless repetition.

In a wider and more philosophical view of the matter, every new application of science and every improvement in art, is a case of advancing organization. It always comes with two faces — one, its effect on what is and what has been; the other, its effect on what may be. Its effect on what is and has been is destructive; hence the doctrine that "the better is the greatest foe of the good." Its effect on what may be is creative; results before impossible are now brought within reach. The cost is the sacrifice of the old and the strain to rise to the command of the new.

The effect on our social life of a misapprehension of the relations between modern arts and wages or any other feature of the economic organization is trifling as compared with the effects of misapprehension of the moral and educating effects of the same arts. It is asserted that there is a moral loss in the sacrifice of skill, and "all-round" efficiency, and dexterity of manipulation. The moral and educating effect on the race of a constant demand to hold the powers alert and on strain to understand and keep up with the "march of progress," transcends immeasurably any similar moral or educating

effect to which men have before been subjected. He who will may see the proofs of it on every side, and on all classes; where are the dull boors, the stupid peasantry, the rollicking journeymen (in the original sense of the word) of former times? There never was a time when a man had so much reason to be a man, or so much to make him a man as he has now.

Those then who ascribe liberty to the wise resolutions of political conventions, and set it in opposition to the industrial conditions of modern life, make a woeful mistake. If we have any liberty, it is power over nature which has put it within our reach, and our power over nature is due to science and art. It is they which have emancipated us, but they have not done it without exacting a price, nor without opening to us new vistas of effort and desire; and liberty is still at the end of the vista, where it always has been and always will be.

The Disappointment of Liberty

As we probe the idea of liberty on one side and another, distinctions are brought to light. First we have revolutionary or anarchistic liberty, the notion of which is that a free man is emancipated from the struggle for existence, and assured everything he needs (wants), by virtue of his liberty, on terms which he shall not regard as onerous. Secondly, we have personal liberty, which is the chance to fight the struggle for existence for one's self, to the best of one's will and ability, within the bounds of one's personal circumstances, for which other men are not responsible, without any risk of being compelled to fight the struggle for anybody else, and without any claim to the assistance of anybody else in one's own. Third, we have civil liberty, which is a status

produced by laws and civil institutions, in which the personal liberty of individuals is secured; it is a status in which all rights and duties are in equilibrium.

Objection has been made to the second and third definitions that a man might steal, by way of liberty to pursue the struggle for existence on his own behalf. The objection only illustrates the difficulty of this order of discussion. It is conceivable that laws and institutions might tolerate stealing, for they have done it; but as there can be no robber without a robbed, and as the definition must apply equally to all individuals in the society, the definition absolutely excluded stealing or other invasion of personal rights. The objection is therefore futile, and does not call for any modification of the definition.

As we go on with the discussion, we also see that in one view of the case all human strength seems to lie in liberty, while in another view it all seems to lie in discipline. At this point a pitfall lies on either side. Anarchists and Nihilists, accepting the notion that in liberty is all strength, elevate revolution to the highest function as a redeeming and reforming force; to destroy and tear down becomes a policy of wisdom and growth; everything which is is in the way; everything which has grown as an institution is an obstacle to that ideal of primitive purity and simplicity, combined with liberty, to which we would be eager to return. Hence liberty of the first species is sought, in practise, by universal negation and reckless destruction. But society cannot sustain itself without stringent organization — organization which coerces its members. Liberty, on this view, is therefore social suicide, for it is war of the society against the most essential conditions of its own existence.

On the other side, the notion that discipline is the secret of all strength is easily convertible into the notion that subordination, submission, obedience to one's fellow-men, is the secret of all strength. That is the fallacy of authoritative absolutism in all its forms. A man without discipline is a boor and a barbarian, but a man who has submitted his will to another mortal's will has broken the spring of moral power. The effect of sound discipline is that it never breaks the spring, but strengthens it, because the individual character reacts with new energy on account of new moral forces which are brought into play, *viz.*, critical reflection and independent conviction. The question which arises at every new crisis in which a man is freed from control is this: if others let go of you will you take hold of yourself? A spoiled boy or man is one in whom a succession of these crises has been decided the wrong way.

At this point the moral problem comes in. It consists in the combination of the two elements of liberty and discipline; and they must be combined according to circumstances. The problem is not, therefore, capable of definite or final solution; it defies analysis and rule. Like other moral problems, it is only a fragment of the great problem of living.

The more widely and thoroughly we explore the field of social fact and relations in which liberty falls, the more are we convinced that liberty in the sense of the first of the above definitions is the grandest of human delusions. That notion of liberty is a part of the great dream that our situation on earth is, to a great extent, a matter of our own choice and decision, or, as the current fashion expresses it, that social questions are ethical. With the growth of social science the old wrangle about free will has been transferred to this domain, and the ques-

tion whether we make our social phenomena or our social phenomena make us, whether the man is a function of the state or the state is a function of the man, is the question whether social science can throw off the thraldom of metaphysics or not. At present we have to note that our studies of liberty, in all its phases and applications, have forced us again and again to observe that there is no real liberty but that which is an affair of history, law, and institutions. It is therefore positive, and so is capable of historical study and scientific analysis.

The dream of liberty has taken possession of men's minds within the last century to the exclusion of other dreams except that of equality — and with good reason, for if the dream of emancipation from the heavy weight of the struggle for existence were realizable it would supersede all other dreams. Then, again, there has been an unprecedented opening of new chances to mankind, which chances have permitted the human race at the same time to increase in numbers and to advance in comfort of living. Political institutions have advanced at the same time and have been assumed to be the cause of the advance in average comfort. This claim has been almost universally admitted, and has produced the natural inference that political devices can do all for us that we can possibly desire. This is the latest Utopianism, and it surpasses all previous phases of Utopianism in pure silliness. Then, again, any period of advancing comfort is sure to be one of advancing sentimentalism; men who are struggling each for himself, under the pressure of dire necessity, will spare little sympathy on each other — it is when they are at ease that they have sympathy to spare. Distress dissolves the social bond; comfort strengthens

it. All these things, then, have concurred within a century to raise and intensify the dream of liberty.

It is not strange that this movement has issued and is issuing in disappointment, neither is it strange that the disappointment should be vented on constitutional liberty, the only true liberty, and never should reach the delusive and fallacious liberty at all. Human history is full of just such errors as that. The last thing in the world to which we attribute our misfortunes is our pet delusions; they stand firm through all.

I say that it is not strange that the dream of liberty should issue in disappointment and revolt, because this liberty has been promised as a cause and guarantee of bliss on earth, and it has failed to give what it promised. Civil and personal liberty help on the evolution of society; they produce growth of individuals and societies. They are not revolutionary, but are hostile to revolution; they stand related to the revolutionary liberty as the truth to the caricature. It stands, therefore, as one of the tasks before our social science to distinguish these two notions of liberty from each other as sharply as possible, and while manifesting the strength and value of the one to show the error and falsity of the other.

Everything, however, which is evolutionary aims to produce the utmost possible, in the next stage, out of the antecedents which lie in the last stage. Evolutionary methods, therefore, have nothing to do with ideals; they aim always at the best possible under the circumstances. Under such methods, therefore, there can be no dreams of universal bliss at all; neither can there be hope in brutal destruction, or unintelligent negation, for any sober reform.

It is most natural that this reduction of all the enthusiastic dreams of the last century to the test of positive

truth should be regarded as "cold" and unsympathetic; that a wider and wider gulf should open between "ethical aspirations" and the products of scientific method applied to social phenomena; and that the point at which the cleft opens should be the doctrine of liberty. Any student of social science who accepts the anarchistic notion of liberty will find himself lost in the new forms of the mist of free-will. No such notion of liberty can be tolerated in a scientific discussion, but only that notion which, being a product of social growth, is within the field of the science itself. On every ground and at every point the domain of social science must be defended against the alleged authority of ethical dicta, which cannot be subjected to any verification whatever.

FANTASIES AND FACTS

SOME POINTS IN THE NEW SOCIAL CREED

As time runs on it becomes more and more obvious that this generation has raised up for itself social problems which it is not competent to solve, and that this inability may easily prove fatal to it. We have been boasting of the achievements of the nineteenth century, and viewing ourselves and our circumstances in an altogether rose-colored medium. We have not had a correct standard for comparing ourselves with our predecessors on earth, nor for judging soberly what we have done or what men can do. We have encouraged ourselves in such demands upon nature or human life that we are ready to declare our civilization a failure because we find that it cannot give us what we have decided that we want. We have so lost our bearings in the conditions of earthly existence that we resent any stringency or limitation as an insult to our humanity, for which somebody ought to be responsible to us. We draw up pronunciamentos, every paragraph of which begins with: "we demand," without noticing the difference between the things which we can expect from the society in which we live, and those which we must get either from ourselves or from God and nature.

We believe that we can bring about a complete transformation in the economic organization of society, and not have any incidental social and political questions arise which will make us great difficulty, or that, if such questions arise, they can all be succinctly solved by saying: "Let the State attend to it"; "Make a bureau

and appoint inspectors"; "Pass a law." But the plain fact is that the new time presents manifold and constantly varying facts and factors. It is complicated, heterogeneous, full of activity, so that its phases are constantly changing. Legislation and state action are stiff, rigid, inelastic, incapable of adaptation to cases; they are never adopted except under stress of the perception of some one phase which has, for some reason or other, arrested attention. Hence, the higher the organization of society, the more mischievous legislative regulation is sure to be. Our discussions, therefore, only show how far we are from having a social science adequate to bear its share of human interests by the side of the other sciences on which human welfare now depends, and, also, how great is our peril for lack of a harmonious development on this side.

We think that security and justice are simple and easy things which go without the saying, and need only be recognized to be had and enjoyed; we do not know that security is a thing which men have never yet succeeded in establishing. History is full of instruction for us if we will go to it for instruction; but if we go to it for information, being unable to interpret its lessons or its oracles, we shall get nothing but whims and fads. Now history is one long story of efforts to get some civil organization which could give security over an indefinite period of time. But no such civil organization has yet been found; we are as far from it as ever. The organization itself has eaten up the substance of mankind. The government of a Roman Emperor, a Czar, a Sultan, or a Napoleon, has been only a raid of a lot of hungry sycophants upon the subject mass; the aristocracy of Venice and other city states has been only a plutocratic oligarchy, using the state as a means to its own selfish ends; democ-

racy has never yet been tried enough to know what it will do, but with Jacobinism, communism, and social democracy lying in wait for it on one side, and plutocracy on the other, its promise is not greater than that of the old forms. It remains to be proved that democracy possesses any stability and that it can guarantee rights.

We think that justice is a simple idea, comprehensible by the light of nature, when justice is really one of the most refined and delicate notions which we have to use, and one which requires the most perfect training for its comprehension. We think that it is a thing which we need only demand of our political institutions, in order to get it, when in fact the best institutions ever yet invented owe their greatest glory to the fact that they have succeeded in but remotely approximating to it.

We think that liberty and freedom are matters of metaphysics, and are to be obtained by resolutions about what is true. We are impatient of historical growth and steady improvement. We are irritated because our ideals fail, and we propose to throw away all our birthright of civil liberty, because a man, even in a free country, cannot have everything that he wants. We are inheritors of civil institutions which it has cost generations of toil and pain to build up, and we are invited to throw them away because they do not fit the social dogmas of some of our prophets.

We think that, if this world does not suit us, it ought to be corrected to our satisfaction, and that, if we see any social phenomenon which does not suit our notions, there should be a remedy found at once. A collection of these complaints and criticisms, however, assembled from the literature of the day, would show the most heterogeneous, contradictory, and fantastic notions.

We think that this is a world in which we are limited by our wants, not by our powers; by our ideals, not by our antecedents.

We think that we are resisting oppression from other men, when we are railing against the hardships of life on this earth. Inasmuch as we are powerless against nature, we propose to turn and rend each other.

We think that capital comes of itself, and would all be here just the same, no matter what regulations we might make about the custody, use, and enjoyment of it.

We demand a political remedy, when what we want is more productive power, which we must find in ourselves, if anywhere. We want more power over nature, but we think that steam and machinery are our enemies and the cause of all the trouble.

We think that there is such a thing as liberty from the conditions of the struggle for existence, and that we can abolish monopoly, aristocracy, poverty, and other things which do not please our taste.

We think that we can impair the rights of landlords, creditors, employers, and capitalists, and yet maintain all other rights intact.

We think that, although A has greatly improved his position in half a lifetime, that is nothing, because B, in the same time, has become a millionaire.

We throw all our attention on the utterly idle question whether A has done as well as B, when the only question is whether A has done as well as he could.

We think that competition produces great inequalities, but that stealing or alms-giving does not.

We think that there is such a thing as "monopoly"; a simple, plain, definite, and evil thing, which everybody can understand and prescribe remedies for. We believe in the "Banquet of Life" and the "Boon of Nature,"

although nature never utters but one speech to us: "I will yield you a subsistence, if you know how to extort it from me."

We think that we can have an age of steam and electricity, and not put any more brains into the task of life in it than our grandfathers put into living in an age of agricultural simplicity.

We find it a hardship to be prudent and to be forced to think; therefore we think that those who have been prudent for themselves should be forced to be so for others.

We think that we can beget children without care or responsibility, and that our liberty to marry when we choose has nothing to do with our position in the "house of have" or the "house of want."

We started out a century ago with the notion that there are some "rights of man"; we have been trying ever since to formulate a statement of what they are. Although these attempts have been made on purely *a priori* grounds, and without the limitations which would be imposed by an investigation of the facts of our existence on earth, nevertheless they have all failed. So far their outcome is: every man has a right to enjoy; if he fails of it, he has a right to destroy.

AN EXAMINATION OF A NOBLE SENTIMENT

A NOBLE sentiment is a very noble thing when it is genuine. A soul which would not throb in response to a noble sentiment, if it were genuine, would prove that it was base and corrupt. On the other hand, a noble sentiment, if it is not genuine, is one of the most corrupting things in the world. The habit of entertaining bogus sentiments of a plausible sound, deprives both mind and heart of sterling sense and healthful emotion. It is no psychological enigma that Robespierre, who was a hero of the eighteenth-century *sensibilité*, should have administered the Reign of Terror. People who gush are often most impervious to real appeals, and to genuine emotion. It therefore seems that we must be on our guard against pretended noble sentiments, as against very dangerous pitfalls, and test them to see whether they are genuine or not.

The sentiment which I now propose to examine is this: that we ought to see to it that every one has an existence worthy of a human being, or to keep it in the form in which it is offered, a *menschenwürdiges Dasein*. It is not a matter of accident that it is stated in German. A noble sentiment often loses poetry and transcendental solemnity to such an extent, when translated into everyday English, that it might seem like begging the question of its truth and value to translate it.

The first question is: what is an existence worthy of a human being? The hod-carrier, who is earning a dollar a day, will say that it is what he could get for a dollar

and a half; the mechanic at two dollars will say that it would cost three; a man whose income is a thousand dollars will say that it costs fifteen hundred. I once heard a man, whose salary was twelve thousand dollars, speak of five thousand a year as misery. A *menschenwürdiges Dasein*, therefore, at the first touch gives us the first evidence of something wrong. It sounds like a concrete and definite thing, but it is not such; a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* is the most shifting and slippery notion which the human mind can try to conceive. In general it is about fifty per cent more than each one of us is getting now, which would, for a time, mean happiness, prosperity, and welfare to us all. It is to be remembered, also, that most of the people who, not in their own opinion, but in that of their neighbors, have not a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* are those who do not like that kind of an existence or want it, but have turned their backs upon it, and are in fact rather more contented than any other class of people with their situation as they are now.

The next question is: for how many people must a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* be provided? The provision of such an existence is the first necessity which meets one of us when he comes to understand the world in which he lives, — that is, he has to earn his living, — for the exceptions, those who inherit a living, are so few that they may be disregarded by the rest of us on whom this proposed duty will fall. The task of earning a living is found, generally, to be a somewhat heavy one, chiefly for the reason, as shown in the former paragraph, that a man's definition of a decent living will not stay fixed long enough for him to realize it. As soon as he thinks that he sees his way to it he wants to marry; then he becomes responsible for the *menschenwürdiges Dasein* of a number of other persons. His whole energy, his

whole life long, rarely suffices to do more than meet this obligation. Such is the fate of the man who tries to guarantee a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* to himself, his wife, and his children. But the man who is to be provided with such an existence, under the new arrangement proposed, will not have any such difficulty to contend with; he is to have a living secured to him by the state, or the social reformers, or somebody else. His wife and children will obviously have as good a claim to a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* as he; their support will therefore cause him no anxiety and no burden. Therefore this class of persons will increase with great rapidity. They are, of course, all those who have neglected or refused to win a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* for themselves; and whenever it is determined that somebody else shall give it to them, it is provided that their number shall multiply indefinitely and forever.

Furthermore, in all these propositions the fact is overlooked that no humanitarian proposition is valid unless it is applied to the whole human race. If I am bound to love my fellow-man, it is for reasons which apply to Laplanders and Hottentots just as much as to my neighbor across the street; our obligation to provide a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* is just as great toward Africans or Mongolians as towards Americans. It must certainly be as wide as all *Menschen*, that is, all human beings. There are millions of people on the globe whose mode of life, whose *Dasein*, is far below that of the most miserable wretch in the United States, never has been any better than it is, never will be any better as far ahead as anybody can see, and they cannot be said to be to blame for it. It is true that they do not know that they are badly off; they do not bother their heads about a *menschenwürdiges Dasein*. They do not work much and

they are quite free from care — very much more so than the average American taxpayer. But, if we are to give a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* to those who have not got it, just because they have not got it (and no other reason is alleged in connection with the proposition before us), then the persons to whom I have referred have a very much stronger claim, for they are very much further away from it.

The next question is: what will be the effect on people of securing them a *menschenwürdiges Dasein?* Plainly it must be to pauperize them, that is, to take away all hope that they can ever win such an existence for themselves. If not, and if the proposition means only that we hope and strive to make our community as prosperous as possible, and to give everybody in it as good chances as possible, then that is just what we are trying to do now, to the best of our ability, and the proposal is only an impertinence; it interrupts and disturbs us without contributing anything to the matter in hand. Now it is one of the worst social errors to pauperize people; it demoralizes them through and through; it ruins their personal character and makes them socially harmful; it lowers their aims and makes sure that they will never have good ones; it corrupts their family life and makes sure that they will entail sordid and unworthy principles of action on their children. If any argument could be brought forward for an attempt to secure to every one an existence worthy of a man, it would be that, in that way, every one among us might be worthy to be a human being; but, whenever the attempt is made, the only result will be that those who get an existence worthy of a human being in that way are sure to be morally degraded below any admissible standard of human worth.

The next question is: who is to secure the *menschenwürdiges Dasein* to the aforesaid persons? Evidently it can only be those who have already, no one knows by what struggles and self-denial, won it for themselves. This proposition, like all the others of the class to which it belongs, proposes to smite with new responsibilities, instead of rewards, the man who has done what every one ought to do. We are told what fine things would happen if every one of us would go and do something for the welfare of somebody else; but why not contemplate also the immense gain which would ensue if everybody would do something for himself? The latter is ever so much more reasonable than the former; for those who are now taking care of themselves have very little strength to spare, while those who are not now taking care of themselves might do a great deal more. The plan of securing to those who have not a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* that blessing, is a plan for leaving the latter at ease and putting more load on the former; to the society, therefore, it is doubly destructive, increasing its burdens and wasting its resources at the same time.

The next question is: what means are to be used to give a *menschenwürdiges Dasein* to everybody? To this there is no answer; we are left to conjecture. The most reasonable conjecture is that the proponents themselves do not know; they have not made up their minds; they have not really faced the question. A proposition to give everybody an existence worthy of a human being, without a specification of the measures by which it is proposed to do it, is like a proposition to make everybody handsome.

Our analysis has therefore shown that this noble sentiment is simply a bathos.

THE BANQUET OF LIFE

In 1886 the American Social Science Association published a set of analytical topics covering the field of social science. The list is in many respects remarkable, and might repay the labor of an examination, taking it as a specimen of analysis applied to social phenomena, and as a revelation of the conception of social science which prevails in some quarters. Among the other topics which the student is invited to discuss is this: "The Banquet of Life, a Collation or an Exclusive Feast." There is here a pardonable attempt at rhetoric. It is to be feared, however, that the student may be misled by the word "collation" into the belief that the antithesis which is suggested is that between something cold and something hot in the way of a meal. The antithesis which is intended, however, is undoubtedly, that between a supply for all and a supply for a limited number. If there is any banquet of life, the question certainly is, whether it is set for an unlimited or for a limited number.

If there is a banquet of life, and if it is set for an unlimited number, there is no social science possible or necessary; there would then be no limiting conditions on life, and consequently no problem of how to conquer the difficulties of living. There would be no competition, no property, no monopoly, no inequality. Fresh air and sunlight are provided gratuitously and superabundantly, not absolutely, but more nearly than any other material goods, and therefore we see that only in very exceptional circumstances, due to man's action,

do these things become property. If food were provided in the same way, or if land, as a means of getting food, were provided in the same way, there would be no social question, no classes, no property, no monopoly, no difference between industrial virtues and industrial vices, and no inequality. When, therefore, it is argued that there is, or was, or ought to be, a banquet of life, open to all, and that the fact that there is no such thing now proves that some few must have monopolized it, it is plain that the whole notion is at war with facts, and that its parts are at war with each other.

The notion that there is such a thing as a boon of nature, or a banquet of life, shows that social science is still in the stage that chemistry was in when people believed in a philosopher's stone, or medicine, when they believed in a panacea, or physiology, when they believed in a fountain of youth, or an elixir of life. Many of the phenomena of the present seem to indicate that this group of facts is just coming under the dominion of science. The discord and confusion which we perceive are natural under the circumstances. Men never cling to their dreams with such tenacity as at the moment when they are losing faith in them, and know it, but do not yet dare to confess it to themselves.

If there was such a thing as a banquet of life, open to all comers, to which each person was entitled to have access just because he was born, and if this right could be enforced against the giver of the banquet, that is, against nature, then we should have exactly what we want to make this earth an ideal place of residence. We should have first of all a satisfaction which cost no effort, which is the first desideratum of human happiness, and which we have not hitherto ever seen realized at all except in the narrow domain of luck. Secondly,

we should have abstract justice in nature, which we have never had yet, for luck is of all things the most unjust. We should also have equality, which hitherto we have never found in nature. Finally, we should have a natural right which could be defined and enforced, not against men, but against nature — the trouble with natural rights hitherto has been that they could not be defined, that nature alone could guarantee them, and that against nature they could not be enforced.

If we take the other alternative and conceive of the Banquet of Life as a limited feast, then we see at once that monopoly is in the order of nature. The question of weal or woe for mankind is: what are the conditions of admission? How many are provided for? Can we, by any means open to us, increase the supply? But when we take the question in this form we see that we are just where we and our fathers always have been; we are forced to do the best we can under limited conditions, and the Banquet of Life is nothing but a silly piece of rhetoric which obscures the correctness of our conception of our situation.

When men reasoned on social phenomena by guessing how things must have been in primitive society, it was easy for them to conceive of a "state of nature" or a "golden age"; but, as we come to learn the facts about the primitive condition of man on earth, we find that he not only found no banquet awaiting him here, and no natural rights adjusted to suit him, but that he found the table of nature already occupied by a very hungry and persistent crowd of other animals. The whole table was already occupied — there was not room for any men until they conquered it. It is easy for any one now to assure himself that this is the true and only correct notion to hold on that matter. If land ever was a

boon of nature to anybody it was given away to the plants and animals long before man appeared here. When man appeared, he simply found a great task awaiting him: the plants and animals might be made to serve him, if he could conquer them; the earth would be his if he could drive off his competitors. He had no charter against nature, and no rights against her; every hope in his situation had an "if" in it — if he could win it.

We look in vain for any physical or metaphysical endowment with which men started the life of the race on earth. We look in vain for any facts to sustain the notion of a state of primitive simplicity and blessedness, or natural rights, or a boon of material goods. All the facts open to us show that man has won on earth everything which he has here by toil, sacrifice, and blood; all the civilization we possess has been wrought out by work and pain. All the rights, freedom, and social power which we have inherited are products of history. Our institutions are so much a matter of course to us that it is only by academical training that we learn what they have cost antecedent generations. If serious knowledge on this subject were more wide-spread, probably we should have a higher appreciation of the value of our inheritance, and we should have less flippant discussion of the question: what is all this worth? We should also probably better understand the conditions of successful growth or reform, and have less toleration for schemes of social reconstruction.

Civilization has been of slow and painful growth. Its history has been marked by many obstructions, reactions, and false developments. Whole centuries and generations have lost their chances on earth, passing through human existence, keeping up the continuity of the race, but, for their own part, missing all share in the

civilization which had previously been attained, and which ought to have descended to them. It is easy to bring about such epochs of social disease and decline by human passion, folly, blunders, and crime. It is not easy to maintain the advance of civilization; it even seems as if a new danger to it had arisen in our day. Formerly men lived along instinctively, under social conditions and customs, and social developments wrought themselves out by a sort of natural process. Now we deliberate and reflect. Naturally we propose to interfere and manage according to the product of our reflection. It looks as if there might be danger soon lest we should vote away civilization by a plebiscite, in an effort to throw open to everybody this imaginary "Banquet of Life."

SOME NATURAL RIGHTS

The mediæval notion about rights was that they were franchises or grants from the head of the state; each man started with just such ones, and so many of them as his ancestors had succeeded in getting out of the struggle of war and court intrigue. If his ancestors had not been successful in that struggle, he had none. The theoretical basis of the civil system was, therefore, the assumption that, in advance of action by the civil authority, man as such had no rights. All must be assumed to be under the same constraints and restrictions, until, by franchises, privileges, and exemptions, each of which was capable of proof by legal evidence, documents, or tradition, some had emancipated themselves from the restrictions. As these franchises and privileges admitted of every variety, when compared with each other or combined with each other, there could be no equality. In the system, the fact that one man had obtained a certain charter was no reason why anybody else should have the same.

It will be found again and again in examining the political and social dogmas which were enunciated in the eighteenth century, and which have become commonplaces and catchwords in the nineteenth, that they had their origin in a just and true revolt against the doctrines of mediæval society, so that they are intelligible and valuable, when viewed in their historical connection, however doubtful they may be when taken as universal *a priori* dogmas.

In the case just stated, we have an instance of this. The eighteenth-century notion of "natural rights," or of the "rights of man," was a revolt against the notion that a man had nothing and was entitled to nothing until some other men had given him some rights here. The rights of man meant that a man, as a man, entered human society, not under servitude and constraint to other men, or to social traditions, but under a presumption of non-servitude and non-obligation to other men, or to social organization. Natural rights, as opposed to chartered rights, meant that the fundamental presumption must be changed, and that every man must, in the view of social order and obligation, be regarded as free and independent, until some necessity had been established for restraining him, instead of being held to be in complete subjection to social bonds, until he could prove that some established authority had emancipated him.

When so regarded, it is evident that the notion of natural rights is one of great value and importance. In the abuse of it, however, it has come to pass that this notion has become a doctrine which affords the most ample space for arbitrary dogmatism, and empty declamation. It has become one of the favorite methods of modern schemers, when they find it difficult to provide means by which men may get what they need in order to enjoy earthly comfort, to put all those necessary things among "natural rights." It then stands established, by easy deduction, that every man has a natural right to succeed in the struggle for existence, or to be happy. It is the duty of the state to secure natural rights. Therefore, if there is anything which a man wants, he is entitled to have it so long as there is any of it.

The notion that all men are equal is likewise reasonable and useful when taken in its historical setting. It meant, in contradiction to the mediæval notion, that whatever rights the state might give to some, it should give to all, and that whatever burdens it laid on some, it should lay on all, without distinction of persons or classes. No such thing has ever been realized or ever can be, and the doctrine would need modification and limitation to make it true, but, as a revolt against mediævalism, it is intelligible. In its best form it is our modern "equality before the law"; but we are constantly striving to use the state to give privileges, and then to make the privileges equal, or to give them to everybody. Turn all such propositions as we will, they are only attempts to lift ourselves by our boot-straps, or to bring good things into existence by decree.

Ever since it has been accepted doctrine that there are natural rights, innumerable attempts have been made to formulate "declarations" of them, that is, to tell what they are. No such attempt has ever succeeded, and the history of the effort to define and specify what the rights of man are is instructive for the sense and value of the notion itself. At present this effort is prosecuted, not by parliaments and conventions, but by social philosophers. As these attempts go on, they develop more and more completely the futility of the notion, or its purely mischievous character as a delusion which draws us away from what might profit us.

Among the latest enunciations of the fundamental and universal rights of man, is that of "the right to the full product of labor." This has been declared, in the most intelligent exposition of it known to me,[1] to be the

[1] A. Menger, "Das Recht auf den vollen Arbeitsertrag." Stuttgart, 1886.

same as "the right to an existence." The two "rights" are in plain contradiction.

In the first place, the "right to the complete product of labor" contains one of the usual ambiguities. Is it meant that the man who does any manual labor in connection with, or contribution to the production of a thing, should have the whole of that thing? Or, is it meant that the man who contributes manual labor to the productive enterprise should have all that part of the thing which belongs to the labor element, in proportion to the capital, land, and other elements which contribute to production? If the former, then we are face to face with a proposition for robbery, with all the social consequences which must be anticipated. Furthermore, although it may seem a very simple thing to provide that those who do the manual work shall have all the product, it is plain, so soon as we reflect upon the complicated combinations of labor which are involved in any case of production, and also upon the complicated character of modern "products" and the way in which they contribute to, and depend upon each other, that it would be impracticable to divide the products among those who have done the labor part of production.

If it is meant that the labor element shall have all the part of the product which is due to the labor element in it, the question arises, how is that element to be measured? How is its proportion to the whole to be determined? At present it is done by supply and demand, and until we have some standard of measurement provided, we cannot tell whether the present arrangement does not do just what is desired. There are constantly reiterated assertions that it does not. It is well worth noticing that no ground for these assertions is offered, and that there is no possibility of verifying them unless

some standard of measurement can be proposed by which we can find out what the share ought to be, and compare it with what is.

In any case the right to the full product of labor would be contradictory to the right to an existence, for, if the full product of the labor of some falls short of what is necessary to maintain their existence, then they must encroach upon the full labor product of the others, that is, impair the right of the latter. The "right to an existence," however, has the advantage of putting the notion in a distinct and complete form; it covers the whole ground at once; it no longer spends energy in struggling for such means as the right to property, or labor, or liberty, or life. If dogmatic affirmation can do anything, why waste it on the means? Why not expend it at once upon the desired end? The real misery of mankind is the struggle for existence; why not "declare" that there ought not to be any struggle for existence, and that there shall not be any more? Let it be decreed that existence is a natural right, and let it be secured in that way.

If we attempt to execute this plan, it is plain that we shall not abolish the struggle for existence; we shall only bring it about that some men must fight that struggle for others.

Although the right of existence has the advantage of being broad and radical, it has the disadvantage of being abstract and impracticable. Another writer [1] has recently given another formula, which, although less ambitious, is equally effective and far more practical; he affirms the natural right to capital. This must be regarded as the rational outcome, so far, of the attempt to formulate natural rights. All the good things which we

[1] "Le Droit au Capital, par Le Solitaire." Paris, 1886.

want, and find so hard to get, depend on capital. Logically, it is less satisfactory to demand a means than to demand an end; but when the means is the one complete and only necessary one, that point is of little importance. If we could all have capital, we should have the great and only weapon for the struggle for existence. It is only a pity, however, that, in this case, as in all the others, so soon as we get a good formula, it turns out to be either a contradiction, a bathos, an impracticability, or an absurdity. So long as capital has to be brought into existence by human labor and self-denial, if we set up a right to capital in all men, we shall have to affirm that those who have not produced the capital have a right to have it, but that those who have produced it have not a right to have it, since from these latter we take it away.

THE ABOLITION OF POVERTY

If it were not for death, disease, and poverty, this world would be a perfectly satisfactory place of abode for man. Hitherto we have endeavored to make the best of it by studying physiology, therapeutics, and hygiene, so as to prolong life and ward off disease, as much as possible, and by trying to devise means for providing ourselves with the necessaries of life, in the greatest possible measure, by the use of our hands and our brains. Death and disease are not yet brought into discussion, under the general philosophy of the day, that everything on earth ought to be so as "to satisfy man's needs," but attention is demanded for grave discussion of means for abolishing poverty. Inasmuch as all that we have accomplished, in the way of conquering the minor ills of life, consists in the acquisition and application of wealth, the abolition of poverty would mean the distribution of wealth, and the summary and successful accomplishment of the struggle for existence, together with the annihilation of all the material cares and petty annoyances of human life.

Every invention or discovery ever made by man, which has been useful and welcome, has been so because it helped to abolish poverty. We hear a great deal about "the social problem," and "the labor question," and, at the end of all the labored discussion, we find that they are just what they have always been since the beginning of civilization, only the question is: how can we apply our energies to the task of living on earth so as to

get the maximum result for a given expenditure of energy? If now a device can be invented which will abolish poverty, it will accomplish the work of all inventions and discoveries at one stroke. All the devices of statesmanship which have ever been made, have at least pretended to work toward the enhancement of the welfare of human beings on earth. If now we can hit upon a device which will organize human society once for all so that poverty will be abolished, we shall have done the whole work at once.

At present, poverty is correlated with ignorance, vice, and misfortune — the slow and tedious processes which we have hitherto been invited to employ and trust, have aimed to abolish poverty by working against ignorance, vice, and misfortune. If we can abolish poverty by a device or contrivance introduced into the social organization, then we can divorce poverty from its correlation with ignorance, vice, and misfortune. We can let those things stand, and yet escape their consequences.

It is plain, however, upon a moment's reflection, that poverty and wealth are only relative terms, like heat and cold. If there were no difference in the command we have over the material comforts of life, there would be no poverty and wealth. As we go down in the scale of civilization we find the contrast less and less; so, on the contrary, as we go up in civilization, we find the contrast greater. There is every reason to suppose that this distinction will become more and more marked at every stage of advance. At every step of civilization, the rewards of right living, and the penalties of wrong living, both become far heavier; every chance for accomplishing something better brings with it a chance of equivalent loss by neglect or incapacity. An American Indian who had a bow and arrow was far superior in wealth to

one who was destitute of those things, but one who has a breech-loading rifle is separated from one who has not by a far wider interval. The men among whom there is the least social problem are those who are in the lowest stages of barbarism, among whom no one has such superiority over the others, in his emancipation from misery, as to make them, by contrast, feel the stress of their situation.

On the other hand, the well-to-do classes in the midst of the most civilized communities show how much has been done to enable any men to emancipate themselves and their children from the grossest ills and hardships of earthly life. But the strain is still in the same direction, and on the same lines, and by the same means; whatever can be proposed to help on the great struggle is to the purpose, and is what we want to learn from anybody who can teach us. The proposition to abolish poverty is a proposition to do the work all at once — to jump to its conclusion. In view of the slow and painful efforts of the past, this is certainly an ambitious proposal.

There is a sense in which it may be said that it is easy to provide a precept for the abolition of poverty. Let every man be sober, industrious, prudent, and wise, and bring up his children to be so likewise, and poverty will be abolished in a few generations. If it is answered that men, with the best intentions, cannot fulfil this precept, because they make innocent mistakes, and fall into errors in judgment, then the demand is changed, and we are not asked for a means of abolishing poverty, but for a means of abolishing human error. If it be objected, again, that sober, industrious, and prudent men meet with misfortune, then the demand is for a means of abolishing misfortune.

Young men among us always talk of the time when they will be rich, as if wealth were at least among the possibilities for each one. At middle life all but a few of us find that we shall never be rich — poverty is our lot. We are in the great crowd to whom, their whole life long, the struggle for material necessities must be the predominant or absorbing interest. If we can support our families and pay our debts, that becomes the horizon of our ambition. We either did not plan our lives correctly, or we have made errors of judgment, or we have misapprehended the facts of life, or we have neglected our opportunities, or we have met with misfortune. If now we could unite our failures and transmute them into success at the bidding of some social magician, and "abolish" the poverty with which we have been contending all our lives, what a grand thing it would be! It would then only remain to abolish disease and death, and all human woes would come to an end at once.

But when we turn to examine the means which we are invited to employ for this purpose, we find that it is only the same old proposal once more in a new disguise; we are invited only to take and waste what wealth there is; we are to abolish poverty by abolishing wealth. We are to go back, in fact, to the primitive barbarism, to the bliss which rests on ignorance, and the contentment which comes from savage stupidity; and the net final gain will be that our envy will no longer be excited by seeing anybody else better off than we.

The philosophizing which goes on about these things is one of the marks of the literature of our time. Most of it is as idle as it would be to write essays about the distress of excessive heat. When all is said, the only rational question is: what can we do about it? When we read the older literature, and note the efforts which

men of former generations made to read the signs of their times, and to interpret what they saw going on about them, we find that they never succeeded, and we may be very sure that we blunder in like manner when we try to do the same thing. The world will not turn backward, because some think that its going forward does not inure to the equal advantage of all; nor even because its going forward is attended by revolutions in industry which are harmful to very many of us. The only sensible thing to do, when such changes come about, which bring some ills upon us, is to seek out all the advantageous chances which the same changes offer us, and to make the most of those.

THE BOON OF NATURE

In former times, when the efforts of man to lift himself by his boot-straps were expended, not upon social enterprises, but upon enterprises in physics and the art of medicine, the reigning idols of desire were the philosopher's stone, the panacea, the fountain of youth, etc. The distinctive mark of this boastful century of ours is likely to be in history that it was the one in which the old delusions and self-deceptions of humanity, driven at last from the domain of physics by the advance of science, retreated to the domain of social phenomena and there entrenched themselves for another attempt to reattain dominion. Accordingly we hear now about the "Banquet of Life," the "Boon of Nature," the "Patrimony of the Disinherited," and other fine phrases of the same class, all of which take for granted the question of most serious import in the whole range of interest to which they apply, *viz.*, whether there really are any such things.

The question whether man comes into this world provided by nature with an outfit of some kind; whether he finds any endowment awaiting him; whether he is started on the struggle for existence with some chances predetermined in his favor by nature; whether he enters into a natural estate; whether nature fits him out with any natural rights; whether he comes into the world as a man goes to a banquet, which somebody has prepared for him, and to which he goes not by invitation, but of right; whether nature's attitude to him is at all that of boon-giver; whether he is born to happiness and has

a right to complain, if he does not have a good time, without regard to his behavior — or whether man has never found in nature anything but a hard-fisted stepmother, who would yield only what was extorted from her; whether he has not had to conquer every good thing which he possesses; whether all rights and liberty are not a product of civilization — these are questions which must be answered by an appeal to history. With the means now at our disposal there can be no doubt as to the answer. We can find no sentiment whatever in nature; that all comes from man. We can find no disposition at all in nature to conform her operations to man's standards, so as to do what is pleasant or advantageous to man rather than anything else. Before the tribunal of nature a man has no more right to life than a rattlesnake; he has no more right to liberty than any wild beast; his right to the pursuit of happiness is nothing but a license to maintain the struggle for existence, if he can find within himself the powers with which to do it. In civilized society the right to live turns into the guarantee that he shall not be murdered by his fellow-men, a right which is a creation of law, order, and civilization, and is guaranteed by nothing less than the stability of the social order as it has been inherited and now is. Liberty is an enlargement of earthly chances for the individual against nature, which has been won by generations of toil and suffering, and which depends upon civilization, as it is the product of it; the right to the pursuit of happiness is nothing but the right to live one's life out in one's own way. Instead of lying back at the origin of society it lies yet a great way in the future, when the present disposition of every one to tell his neighbors how they ought to live shall have been overcome. Probably the primitive savage was happy according

to his standards; but if even it were true that primitive men had and enjoyed some boon of nature, how can it be imagined that a civilized society could get happiness for its members according to the standards of civilized society, while re-establishing any of the facts and conditions of primitive savage life? If we had to go back to the origin of civilization to get the boon, how much would the boon be worth?

In truth there is no boon, and never was. Nothing could well be more contradictory to the facts as they appear than the notion of such a thing.

It is said, of course, that the earth is the boon, that is to say, the "land." The notion which has been caught up is that the land is a gift of nature to all and that some have monopolized it. How many were the "all" to whom it was given? How many are the "some" who have monopolized it? Plainly what is meant and ought to be said is, that the land was given to many and has been monopolized by a few. This is the very opposite of the truth — the earth was given to a few, and civilization has made it available to a large number. Monopoly is in nature, and liberty, or relaxation of monopoly, is one of the triumphs of civilization. The "land" in this connection is a very delusive expression. Every man who stands on the earth's surface excludes every one else from so much of it as he covers; every one who eats a loaf of bread appropriates to himself for the time-being the exclusive use and enjoyment of so many square feet of the earth's surface as were required to raise the wheat; every one who burns wood to warm himself, or uses the fiber of cotton or wool to clothe himself, appropriates in monopoly a part of the land so far as the land is of utility or interest to man. Perhaps the most fundamental fact which makes this world a

world of toil and self-denial is that two men cannot eat the same loaf of bread. This pitiless and hopeless monopoly is, in the last analysis, the reason for capital and rent, for property and rights, for law and the state, for poverty and inequality.

There are many reasons why it would appear more correct to say that nature gave man to the earth than that she gave the earth to man. If we try to form a notion of the condition of the man who first received the boon in its fresh originality, before anybody had stolen or appropriated it, we find that it was given to him in just the same sense in which it was given to the other animals, only that they had priority and were already in full possession. Man was far superior to them in organization, and he displaced them; but the nearer we get back to the pure boon, the more we find man like the other animals in his mode of existence, his grade of comfort, his standard of happiness, his relation to the "land," and his subjection to nature. If now, we build houses several stories high, so that several men can, in effect, stand on the same square feet of the earth's surface, or if we make the same number of square feet bear two loaves of bread instead of one, we break the monopoly of nature, but we do it by capital and the arts of civilization. Whatever we have, therefore, which is worth having is not a boon of nature, but a conquest of civilization from nature.

If we look at any part of the earth's surface in a state of nature as it is when given to man, instead of finding that it fills any notion of gift or boon, we find that it offers a task of appalling magnitude. It is covered with trees, or stones, or swamps; or hostile animals of various kinds occupy it; or malaria stands guard over it. Between the boon and any use by man stands a series

of obstacles to be overcome; dangerous and toilsome work to be done. It is a chance for the man to maintain the struggle for existence if he is strong enough to conquer obstacles; if not, then he may lie down and die of despair on the face of the boon and not a breeze, or a leaflet, or a sunbeam will vary its due course to help or pity him. This is the only attitude in which we find nature when we come face to face with her in her original attitude toward mankind; it is only when we come to meet her, armed with knowledge, science, and capital, that we force back her limitations and win some wider and easier chances of existence for ourselves.

Robinson Crusoe enjoyed the boon of nature. He climbed to the top of his island and looked about, "monarch of all he surveyed," not a human soul to divide or dispute it with him; but he sank down in despair, thinking himself the most miserable of living creatures, just because he had the boon all to himself and because the maintenance of his existence was such a crushing task. How many men in the United States to-day could maintain their existence each on a square mile of land, in its natural condition, in the temperate zone, if they were cut off from society and civilization?

Only the hardiest and strongest men are now capable of breaking up land in a state of nature, and beginning the reduction of it to human use, even when they have the resources of the arts and capital, and are supported and reinforced all the time by a strong civilized society behind them. There are millions of acres of the "boon" now open to any one who will go to them, and none go but those who are at the same time physically the strongest and socially the worst off of living men. The existing landowners of the United States are represented to be holding, unjustly, exclusive possession of what nature

has given to us all. But, although in the sixteenth century the whole territory now in this Union stood free and open, entirely unappropriated by white men, yet every one of the numerous attempts that were made to establish settlements of white men here failed. Instead of finding nature holding out a boon which they had only to take, they found her waiting for them with famine, cold, and disease. The settlement at Jamestown barely maintained itself against the hardships and toil of its situation; the Plymouth settlement would not have survived its first winter if the Indians, instead of being hostile, had not given aid. No settlement was established until it was supported by capital and maintained through a period of struggles and first conquest over nature, by reinforcements from a secured and established civilization in the Old World.

There is no boon in nature. All the blessings we enjoy are the fruits of labor, toil, self-denial, and study.

LAND MONOPOLY

If a man were finding his way along a road, or through a wood, with no other mortal within a mile, the way in which he swung his arms, or otherwise behaved himself, would be of no consequence to any one but himself. If he met, now and then, another, his movements would have to be put under some slight and occasional restraint. If he were walking down a city street, his entire behavior would necessarily be subjected to discipline. If he were trying to force his way through a dense crowd, he would have to be content with very slow speed, and would have to use the utmost care and attention in the mode of his contact with the individuals around him. The limitations on his freedom of movement, on his chances of getting ahead with speed on his own business and on his personal comfort, would not advance in proportion to the increasing numbers about him, but would advance in a progressive and very rapidly increasing ratio.

If a man lived on a farm with no neighbor within a mile, the sanitary arrangements in and around his dwelling would have little importance except for his own family, and sanitary arrangements would be of very little importance at best under such circumstances. If he lived on a village street, sanitary arrangements would attain a certain importance. If he lived in a city they would become a leading interest. If he lived in a tenement in a densely populated part of a great city, sanitary arrangements would stand among the very first of the interests of himself and his neighbors. The interest and importance of sanitary arrangements would advance

under the same law as the limitations on personal chance and convenience in the previous case.

If there were a space which possessed advantages for any interest of mankind, — being in the sunlight or out of it, in the wind or out of it, near to a spring or remote from a swamp, salubrious, possessing a fine view, or otherwise desirable, — if this space were large and ample in proportion to the number of men who desired to avail themselves of it, no competition or struggle would take place between them for it; but if their number increased, contact and collision would begin. If there should come to be more persons eager for the advantage of situation than could find place under the physical limitations existing, this struggle would go on to any degree of intensity. It would advance under the same law of progression previously stated.

If a number of persons are out in the fields, fresh air is present in immense superfluity. The personal habits of these persons, *e.g.*, cleanliness, would be of little importance; even if some of them had a contagious disease, the danger of infection would be slight. But if they came nearer together, and then nearer, and were finally crowded tightly into some limited and enclosed space, they would consume the air away from each other, they would poison each other; and if there were a disease among them its chances of being transmitted would rise toward certainty.

In the mere matters of space and fresh air and sunlight, therefore, men are under conditions of monotony and exclusion; their spheres of interest and of life-supply collide, and they become noxious to each other, whether they will or not, under a rapidly increasing progression, when their numbers increase with respect to the natural conditions.

If a number of men live on the banks of a stream which offers a supply of water far in excess of all their requirements, no question of water-supply rises among them. If, however, they need water to irrigate their land, or if they keep flocks and herds which must get water from few, scattered, and scanty springs, water may come to be an object of earnest contention and struggle; if they want water for power, they find that the power of a certain fall is a limited quantity. If they contend for it they may divide it up. If the competitors become more numerous, an advancing limitation and deficiency are experienced by all; they run inevitably into a situation where so many want all that none have any. If they want air for power, they find that the favorable situations for windmills are limited, that these will all be occupied as the number who need them increases, and then that the occupiers will impede each other.

If men who have a large wood-supply waste it as fuel, no human interest is affected. It is true even then that what one takes out of the supply of nature another cannot have and use; but when there is more than enough for all, no protest is made. As numbers increase and the wood is cut off, every man who appropriates a tree to make a table out of it, or to burn it for his own fuel-supply, invades by just so much the sphere of interest of his neighbors, and as the number increases all must sink into a condition of want and misery, that is, of imperfectly satisfied necessities, not in a direct ratio, but under the same advancing progression.

If the woods are full of game and the men are few, there is no problem of food supply and no social question. Land means nothing but game. Any one who kills an animal invades and exhausts the common stock,

but no one complains. As the number of the men increases, their consumption surpasses the natural increase of the animals and reacts upon the number of the men. An increase in the number of the men will therefore produce all the darkest phenomena of the competition of life, reduce the whole to misery, and produce a "social question." As regards furs used by man, we have a case of this law at the present time in the midst of civilization. Art has been able only in a very limited measure to act upon the production of fur; we are still obliged to rely upon the natural increase, and the fur industry consists in little else than the appropriation of what nature produces. It is, therefore, an industry nearly on the plane of the very first and primary industries of mankind. If we confine attention to the best and finest furs of wild animals, this would be absolutely true. Now, as the earth is more and more fully populated, and the animals are killed off, the supply diminishes, and as wealth increases the demand increases, so that a fur industry is inevitably a monopoly, and one with an unearned increment of the best defined character; yet if we should all try to make good our claim to the bounty of nature in the seals of Alaska or the sables of Siberia, how should we do it?

We see, therefore, that every natural agent is a natural monopoly. Men want land only for the sake of the standing-room, air, water, sunlight, animals, fish, trees, minerals, stone, lumber, firewood, etc., which they get out of it. In regard to every one of these things they are living and working under the conditions of monopoly. When the supply under any monopoly is indefinitely large with respect to the demand, the monopoly has no stringency or pressure and is of no importance; but as the demand rises the pressure of the monopoly

advances in a progression to which no limits can be assigned. The exclusion which the men exercise toward each other is not in law or in property; it is in use. A man appropriates a plant, tree, animal, mineral, or other thing out of the raw product of nature, because he wants to consume it in satisfaction of his wants. When he does so consume it, he excludes everybody else from the same satisfaction by the use of the same natural product. He cannot do anything else if he proposes to live; his only alternative is to commit suicide and get out of the world so as to leave more room for others.

Hence, it is clear how crude and futile is the notion that monopoly, or monopoly of land, is modern and a product of civilization; and the same is true of the whole current set of notions about appropriation, "bounty of nature," "unearned increment," and all the rest; and, more especially still, the notion that in some primitive time and under some original organization of society, none of these things were as they are now. In fact, there has never been a time when the natural monopoly of land pressed harder on men than when there was no private property in land at all. Hunting and pastoral tribes do not have private property in land. What is the condition, however, of men in a hunting or pastoral tribe, when the numbers of the population exceed that which the existing supply of animals (which is what land means to hunters) or of pasturage (which is what land means to a pastoral tribe) will support? Our Indians and the hordes of Asiatics who have invaded Europe offer ample evidence from which to answer the question.

It is a crude modern notion that property grows rationally and justly out of labor. It does not, and every lawyer knows that it never has. Every act of labor has to be preceded by an act of appropriation in taking

the raw material out of the material product of nature; that is, it is inevitably based on this monopoly use of land which is so vehemently denounced. The simplest case is that of the domestication of animals. For domestication, animals must originally be appropriated from nature, and then, instead of being consumed directly, they must be retained for increase, and for secondary products, as milk, butter, eggs, hair, wool. In time labor is spent to raise the breed and to produce artificial varieties, just as land is, by cultivation, turned into a thing utterly different from land as it appears in the "Boon of Nature." In spite of the application of labor and capital, the natural monopoly element never disappears; it recurs in new form in the case of the specialty and rareness of the highly cultivated breeds. Here, also, there is an unearned increment. If we compare the relative value of horses and other things in the Middle Ages with the value of horses and other things now, it appears that a family which had bred and sold horses from then until now, would have made far greater profits than a family who had held land and rented it from then until now.

Under the pressure of the natural monopoly of the means of subsistence, any body of men is doomed to advance to a position of general misery and want. They will be substantially equal under it, if that is any satisfaction to them. Their real and only escape lies in the arts of civilization and in science; but if they pursue those they will have to give up equality, and will have to consent that those who lead the way out shall enjoy the largest share of the gains. They have always consented to this, not because they loved the leaders, but because it was best for themselves.

A GROUP OF NATURAL MONOPOLIES

The means of transportation are natural monopolies. A turnpike, a canal, or a railroad from one point to another, if it could run on a mathematical straight line, would be a complete monopoly because there is but one such line. If more and more railroads are built until they form a net-work, they either form a very highly developed form of competition, in which there are complicated factors united under a very intricate combination, or they run over into artificial monopolies. In the former case the legitimate remuneration of the owners of the railroad is sacrificed; in the latter case the tendency is to take away from the community all advantage of the railroads by making the people pay so much for it that they are in effect put back where they would have been if there had been no railroad. Hence the immense complexity of the railroad problem and the mischief of the various rough-and-ready solutions of it which have been offered.

The transmission of intelligence by telegraph is a natural monopoly; the mail and express transportations are included under transportation in general; and all other transmission of intelligence by telegraph or telephone must be a monopoly. The physical difficulties of reduplicating the apparatus within the limits of space where it must be used produce this necessity.

The organization for this purpose which has the most widely extended apparatus, which can reach the greatest number of points, and which is ready to take any

business at any time and perform it with the least doubt or delay, will always have an advantage in competition for business, if there is competition, which will enable it to advance to a monopoly. The reasons lie in the natural conditions of the business and there is, as yet, no means known for escaping it.

The gas and water supply, and apparently, also, the electric light supply of a city are natural monopolies. The reasons are chiefly those already given with regard to telegraphs; the physical conditions of the space within which the apparatus must lie make it impossible to bring competition to bear.

All literary productions are natural monopolies. A newspaper is a natural monopoly; it uses its name for a definition and limit of its monopoly; it exploits its reputation and its efforts toward success all take the form of distinguishing itself from other journals and conquering a field of influence and profit which it can maintain as exclusively as possible. The great number of journals tend more and more, as they win success, to become individualized and then the exploitation of their productive power is subject to the rules of monopoly.

Every book is a monopoly, and copyrights, perhaps, better than anything else serve to illustrate the wide range through which monopoly may act. Volumes are printed which scarcely any one will buy. The owner of the copyright has an absolute monopoly, but, there being no demand, his monopoly is worthless — from which it appears that a man cannot oppress his fellows simply because "he has a monopoly." From this supposition upward there may be all stages of demand for a book until we come to those which can be sold by the tens of thousands. The law of copyright does not create the monopoly; that lies in the unique creation of the

author; the law only enables him to prevent any one else from exploiting it, just as it prevents one man from exploiting another man's land. Neither does the law give him possession of the ideas in the book but only of the mechanical form and verbal dress in which they are composed. Hence the customary coupling together of patents and copyrights is incorrect, for patents are artificial monopolies, while copyrights are natural monopolies.

On account of the common element of natural monopoly, the business of a great publishing house and the business of a great railroad have common elements in the economic principles on which they are conducted, however far apart the two forms of business may, in their general character, seem to be.

A paper currency is a natural monopoly; banks did not make it a monopoly. The amount of money-metal in the world being taken as it is, the specie circulation must be an exact quantity, and paper currency to that amount can be issued, and no more. It may all be issued by one bank, or a thousand may compete for it, but its total is limited in value amount. If more should be issued, it would depreciate so that, at least, its value would not exceed the specie which it displaced.

Finally all forms of personal excellence, superiority, skill, and distinguished attainment constitute natural monopolies and find their reward under applications of the monopoly principle. The doctrine of non-competing groups in industry is simply a case of monopoly. Those men who enter into the industrial organization armed only with muscular power and without natural or acquired power to distinguish them from brutes or machines are on a dead level of competition with brutes or machines; then every advancing grade of acquire-

ment forms the basis of a new and, generally speaking, less numerous group of persons. Every such group of higher and higher specialization is protected in its higher advantages by the principle of monopoly. When we try to stimulate our young men to work and study, and to the improvement of their youth, we declare to them that every attainment which they make will secure to them command over the ills and chances of life; but we have no guarantee for the truth of what we say except in the monopoly advantage which comes from superiority. The professions, in general, owe their superior advantage to the double fact that they are occupied with personal services in which machines cannot compete, and that the natural monopoly in them is hedged about by high acquirements which cost long effort and large expenditure of capital.

From these instances and those which I gave in a former place it is evident that "monopoly" is not what it is often called in current declamation. Monopoly is not an invention of man, least of all a modern invention; nor is it a product of "capitalistic society"; it is interwoven with the whole life of man on earth, in all its forms and from the earliest times. It is not now at one pole of society, with competition and liberty at the other; they meet and shade off into each other at a common boundary. It is not reasonable to denounce natural monopolies, because if they are founded in the order of nature no one is to blame for them, and nothing can modify them but such applications of intelligence as may change their form or combine their action with new forces. Neither are natural monopolies all or always mischievous; they have very great utility and advantage. It is therefore an abuse to use "monopoly" as a word of sweeping and self-evident condemnation.

ANOTHER CHAPTER ON MONOPOLY

In preceding pages I have analyzed and discussed some leading and typical forms of natural monopoly. It is easily perceived, upon a view of facts, that monopoly is in the order of nature, and that it predominates over all the most fundamental relations of man to the earth on which he lives. It is not a product of civilization, or a result of the capitalistic organization of society, or an invention of the *bourgeoisie*, as is so often asserted. If then any one desires to declaim against it, he must understand that he is at war, not with human institutions, but with facts in the order of the universe.

Civilization is in fact one long struggle against the natural monopolies which have been described, or, more accurately, it is an attempt to set one of them against another. When man domesticated animals, and made of them beasts of draught and burden, he got one of the natural monopolies on his side as an instrument with which to fight against the monopoly of the land; when he discovered fire, he got a natural force on his side which was of immense help to him in contending with all the other limitations of his position. Wind, falling water, steam and electricity are all natural agents which man has learned to subdue to his service in his contests with nature. Therefore, whatever emancipation from the extremest hardships of earthly existence — whatever liberty — man has won, has been won by civilization, and therefore also, at every new stage, the old natural monopolies have persistently reappeared, only in a much

modified form. At the same time this civilization has cost mankind many inconveniences and it has, in many respects, involved experiences which we do not like. It has subjected us to drill and discipline; the civilized man is disciplined in his feelings, modes of action, the use of his time, his personal relations, and in all his rights and duties. As civilization goes on the necessity grows constantly more imperative that any man who proposes to pass his life in the midst of a civilized society must find a place in its organization and conform to its conditions. At the same time the civilized man, instead of living instinctively, as his ancestors did only a few centuries ago, has become a rationalizing animal. He reflects and deliberates; he makes deductions and generalizations.

For a century at least he has been fed with a literature saturated with tremendous dogmas about the rights of man, liberty, etc., etc. — dogmas which are adequate to furnish a foundation for unlimited political, economic, and social speculation. The facts of the social order do not correspond with the deductions from these great dogmas. Consequently we have a whole literature of denunciation; of social theory to span the gap between the two; of superficial scholarship about primitive property; of sentimental lamentation and aspiration. In all this there is no apparent appreciation of the difference between what is natural law and what is human institution; what is fruitful investigation of facts and what is idle romancing; and the reigning confusion is shown best of all by the way in which the most powerful and legitimate engines of scientific advance are confused with the abuses of generalization and speculation, and all thrown away together, while whims and fads are eagerly seized, if they have only the ethical or statistical varnish.

Now a civilized society exists on an artificial level. The domestic animals which we use are not the ones which nature gave us; they have been brought by the labor and ingenuity of man so far away from their original type that we do not always know what the latter was. The grains, fruits, and vegetables which we eat are not any which nature gave us; we have transformed them out of all semblance to their original types. The clothes which we wear were never given to us by nature; between anything given by nature and the shoes, hats, coats, and dresses which we wear, lies a history of thousands of years of labor, experiment, ingenuity, and caprice. Our houses were not given to us by nature; a modern house has a history thousands of years long when we call to mind the steps of invention and experiment, and the thousand converging lines of discovery and invention of details which have gone to make it. So one might go on indefinitely, but it is plain that the whole environment of a civilized man is artificial. He has cut himself off by his clothes, his house, his fuel, his lights, and so on, from the influence of the natural environment — climate, weather, soil, vegetation — and has made a world for himself on a new plane. The price which he has had to pay for this has been persistent labor and constant accumulation of capital; he has to submit to organization; he has to take a place in the social organization and seek his own welfare as a component in the great organized onslaught made by the race on nature to make her yield the comforts of existence. In doing this he has to sacrifice that liberty which consists in doing as he likes. He has been taught that this liberty is his birthright, and that, together with it, he ought to get ease and comfort; but the man who revolts against society and breaks out of the organization, suffers even

worse penalties now than he did in the lower forms of society, when a nomad horde or a hunting tribe expelled a dissenter. Likewise the real hardships of our social order come when one is thrown out, or falls out, himself innocent, from the organization.

The ancient classical civilization was founded on an enormous consumption of human power: the whole fabric was maintained by the expenditure of slave power underneath, and the weight of it became so great that the slaves could not and would not increase in numbers sufficiently to bear it, while the ruling body lost the power to conquer more nations and bring in new resources of enslaved men. Modern civilization is built upon machines and natural agents, brought into play through machines, that is, through capital. Herein lies the true emancipation of men and the true abolition of slavery. Then come these two questions: (1) can we keep the advantages and comforts of a high civilization, based on capital, while attacking the social institutions by which the creation of capital is secured? (2) are we prepared to give up the comforts of civilization rather than continue to pay the price of them? No one who forms his judgments on a study of facts can answer the first question in the affirmative; no one who is familiar with current thought will say that people are prepared to give an affirmative answer to the second.

Moreover, in the modern civilized community the path of greatest success is that of distinguished service to the organization. This service is highest when it consists in accumulating capital, in perfecting the organization, in new inventions and constructions, and in skilful use of the apparatus. As this goes on we educate, from generation to generation, men who are capable of more and more comprehensive control. At last a few such

men, at the head of the great combinations which are essential to the support of our social life on its present grade of comfort, are able, by agreement among themselves, to bring in again the form of monopoly which previously existed, but had for a time been interrupted.

Hence we get "trusts" and "pools"; but here also the question is: whether to deal with the evil by pushing on to the next stage in which the progress of invention, or the modifications of process are likely to bring in competition in a manner disastrous to the monopolies, or to seek a remedy which will arrest the industrial forces in their development on which our social well-being depends.

Finally, we must notice that the monopolists who are the commonest, and also the most unpopular, are the man who has, by the accumulation of capital, raised himself above the grossest wants and hardships of life, and the son of such a man. The former has in this way raised himself into a position of superiority to his fellow-beings; he has also guaranteed the latter against the worst hardships of life and given him "a privileged position," as it is sometimes called for the sake of carrying over to it the odium incurred by artificial superiority and immunity. This case, however, brings me to the family as the stronghold of monopoly.

THE FAMILY MONOPOLY

In the current discussions about property, rights, and social relations, it is very rare to see any appreciation manifested of the connection between the family and property. Yet this connection lies at the root of the whole matter. The grandest and most powerful monopoly in the world is the family, in its monogamic form; we have sects which have perceived this and made it an object of their agitation. They are not large, and, for obvious reasons, they are regarded with suspicion and abhorrence by respectable people; but it is undeniable that when they inveigh against monogamic marriage as monopoly, and against the monogamic family as the hotbed of selfishness, they have facts to support their position which are as true and as much to the point as any of the current denunciations of monopoly and selfishness in reference to capital and the industrial system.

I beg the reader to note carefully the form and limits of the statement which I have just made. The parallel which I affirm is not rhetorical, it is in the essence of the facts; when I say that one set of assertions are as well grounded as the other, the force and point of the assertion lie in the "just as much as." Both are correct as to the facts in a certain measure and way; both are fallacious as they are ordinarily asserted and employed. It is not easy to deal with the matter from the side of the family within the proper restrictions, but the necessity of a better popular understanding of the general subject is so great that I am compelled to try it.

Speaking from the standpoint of social science, I hold monogamy to be the greatest step in the history of civilization. This opinion is, it is true, treated by some sociologists with ridicule; I, however, make bold to hold it and to believe that the present generation is not more false to its interests in any other respect than in its inadequate and distorted conception of what the monogamic family yet needs in the way of perfection and sanctity. I use the last term also with distinct intention, meaning thereby that religion has no higher function, in modern society, than to maintain all its institutional effect on marriage and the family.

The specific influence of the family is exerted on women and on children. The monogamic wife is the only wife who shares the life of her husband. Some other kinds of wives are greater than their husbands, and some are lower; the monogamic wife alone can have an independent and co-ordinate sphere, on an equal footing with her husband, yet different from his sphere. The children of a monogamic marriage alone have that home life, that atmosphere of affection and care, which produces the best human beings. They alone get true education; for it does not come from books and schools, it comes from tireless watching, patient training, persistent restraint and encouragement, at the fire-side and at all moments of life, weaving a tissue of unconscious habit into the fiber of the life of the future men and women.

This is, undoubtedly, an ideal, but it is not an ideal which floats in the air as a poetic vision alone. It is realized often enough and sufficiently in our observation for us to know that it can be, and is.

Monogamic marriage, however, is a great monopoly. It is grand and noble for those who get into it, but like

other monopolies, it wins an advantage for those who are included at the cost of depression to those who are excluded; and millions, of course, in trying to attain to the heights of a monogamic marriage, fail. If they fall, they fall far lower than they would be under lower forms of marriage. The children of a monogamic family have a far better chance than those of any other form of the family, provided the monogamic family realizes approximately its own theory; but it is not impossible that the children reared in a Turkish harem may have a happier fate than the children of a monogamic household in which the parents quarrel or are divorced.

The monogamic family evidently owes its strength and value, then, to the fact that it constitutes a close and solid unit with greater internal cohesion than any other form of the family, and more complete severance externally from every other unit. Its exclusiveness is of its essence; it exerts an intenser educating power on its members on account of its distinctness and comparative isolation. Accordingly any form of communal life, any higher development of social relations, as in hotel life in this country, or in the case of fashionable life, where the attention of the parents is occupied outside of the family, causes the family life, the domestic influences, and the family education to suffer.

The people who, just now, are captivated by any "altruistic" notion cannot decide whether the family is to be included in the sphere of the selfish or the altruistic. Their quandary has its good causes in the facts of the case. The selfish and the altruistic sentiments are inextricably interwoven, and their interlacings or common ground lie in the family sphere; but the family institution, the isolated family group, as a unit, sharply severed and highly and distinctly developed against all

other family units, is, in fact, the hotbed of those sentiments which are denounced as selfish — above all such of them as are connected with social rank and property.

The facts are open to the observation of all. "He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune." If you intensify his family affection, you will in the same degree absorb his energies in the determination to redeem those pledges. If, therefore, the growth of social institutions is in the direction of monogamy, if we thereby win a better position for women and a better education for children, we also intensify a man's feeling of cohesion with his own wife and his own children, aside from and against all the world; and his and their interests, while more absolutely identified with each other, are set in more complete indifference or more pronounced antagonism to those of other people than any other social arrangement. This consequence is inevitable and it plainly exists. The sentiments which are nowadays jumbled together under the head of "individualism," in accordance with the general confusion and looseness with which all these matters are treated, are, in fact, products of this family sentiment.

The selfishest man in the world will pour out his money like water on his children. A man who fights all the world with pitiless energy in the industrial conflict, will show himself benevolent to his family. It is for them that he fights. A man of fifty, alone in the world, might feel indifferent about the accumulation of wealth, or look with comparative indifference upon the danger of monetary loss, but a similar man, with a family dependent upon him, is eager to win wealth, or is overwhelmed by anxiety at the danger of loss. It is not for themselves that men in middle life work; it is for wives and children.

I, therefore, agree perfectly with the socialists as to the facts of the case. They have always recognized the fact that property and the family are inextricably interwoven with each other from their very roots in the remotest origin of civilization. The more logical they are the more fearlessly they follow out this fact, and attack the family in order to succeed in their attack on property. It is to be conceded to them, at least, that they can see facts and estimate their significance, while the sentimentalists and semi-socialists only muddle everything. The issue is a plain one, and one which admits of no compromise whatever: property and the family stand or fall together; we must either maintain them both with the individualists, or overthrow them both with the socialists.

The people who talk about rooting out monopoly will never succeed in their undertaking until they root out that family monopoly which alone gives significance to all the others. It may be that in some abstract sense the earth was given to all mankind. What I want is a piece of it with which to support my family. When I get it (which I must do by going on until I find unoccupied land, or by a peaceful contract with some one already holding a monopoly, unless I propose to kill a monopolist family in order to put mine in its place) I shall want it as a monopoly, that is, I shall want to be sure that my children, and not any other man's, will eat the crop. There will, therefore, be "private property in land" there and I shall have no need of the "state," unless the state means simply that my neighbors will join with me in a mutual assurance that we can each guarantee the existence of our families by the monopoly of our land.

THE FAMILY AND PROPERTY

Private property, even private property in land, exists in some of the most primitive forms of human society; monogamic marriage likewise exists in some of the most primitive and barbarous forms of society. It is not possible to construct any scale or ladder of consecutive stages under either of these heads, starting from some most rudimentary and negative organization, and rising higher and higher, as it approaches nearer to what now exists in civilized states. It should be understood that no sociologist, evolutionist or other, attempts to do anything of the kind. Evolution would, in fact, account for and show the necessity of retrogressions and anomalies, interrupting any such series.

In fact, retrogressions and anomalies meet us at every turn, and a scientific student of sociology is sure to be timid about those generalizations which seem the most tempting; this is, in fact, the strongest reason for the impatient rejection of the easy dogmatizing which is in fashion and which has fastened upon property as its especial prey. To dictate what our neighbors shall do with their property is, of course, the next pleasantest thing to having property of our own at our disposition. Property is the most fundamental and complex of social facts, and the most important of human interests; it is, therefore, the hardest to understand, the most delicate to meddle with, and the easiest to dogmatize about. There is not at the present time any similar disposition to dogmatize about the family, and it has seemed to me

that I could show the error and fallacy of a great deal of the current talk about property if I should follow out the parallel between property and the family and should show their intimate and mutual relations as social facts.

It is as impossible to find the origin of property as it is to find the origin of marriage, and for exactly the same reason — namely, that no society could exist without each. Marriage means reproduction and property means nutrition, and no society could exist without both. If a man took a plant or an animal out of nature for his own support, he had to appropriate it into private and exclusive property. Therefore, it is plain that, if property is an "institution," so is marriage an institution in exactly the same sense and in exactly the same degree. In both cases there is a natural fact, just as essential to the life of the race and just as independent of human assent in the one case as in the other; in each case the artificial construction bears the same relation to the natural fact.

In the lowest forms of society the prevailing germ of the family consists of a mother with her child; it is the father who remains longest without a place or share in the family. In this form of society we also find the first germ of sentiment; for the woman, although otherwise treated as a beast of burden and destitute of rights, almost always enjoys a degree of respect when she is a mother. In general, and due allowance being made for the anomalies already referred to, the family organization just described is that of the hordes which possess property in common. The men of the horde conduct its affairs and look upon the children, especially the boys, as the strength of the horde in the future; they therefore value them, but they have no rights "in severalty" over the children. In countless instances it is known

that the father of certain children was a stranger, a man of another tribe, long since departed; indeed, the law of the tribe would not have allowed any other sort of person to become the woman's husband. With the children in common, and the property in common, we have a type of the communalism, not to say communism, which is so captivating to some of our contemporaries among civilized man. It is plain that the society, however, is consistent in its parts, and that its organization is conducive to its interests. Investigation also shows, in every case known to me, that the organization was convenient under the economic circumstances of the tribe, and was dictated by those circumstances, except when it appears to have remained as a survival, under tradition and religious sanction, into a higher social development for which it was unfitted.

Our modern students, then, searching into the history of property, find these rudimentary communal forms, and they present to us the result of their work as if these facts carried with them some proof as to the only correct or justifiable forms of property, or furnished some criticism of present institutions. But, if the primitive forms of property bear any authority as to the proper forms of property, why do not the corresponding facts in regard to primitive marriage and the primitive family carry with them authority for the criticism of existing family institutions? If the fact that communal property has existed widely in primitive society goes to prove that communal property is a presumptively better or purer form of property than that which now exists, why is not the same argument good in favor of communal marriage? In fact, the fallacy is one which is very familiar under the form of the ecclesiastical dogma of "primitiveness."

Throughout a wide range of rudimentary society women are treated as beasts of burden. When regarded industrially they are drudges or slaves. The most disagreeable work is all put upon them. They are therefore regarded as property, and are assimilated to property to such a degree that the rights which the men have in respect to women are logically developed from the notion of property in the wives. The right of property in this case, as in other primitive cases, rests upon force; a man has more wives than one just as he would have more slaves than one, if he could capture or keep them. The polygamous form of the family is immensely higher than the form last described; but, when the man first enters upon permanent relations with his wife or wives and his children, we find him ruling by pure brute force. "Ruling" in this case was not a passive carrying of authority, but a persistent and active domination, or force, in the form in which one person's will overrides and crushes that of others.

Furthermore, wives are obtained, in this stage of society, by capture; that is, by force actively and actually exerted against the woman, her relatives, and weaker rivals. No other social arrangement can be mentioned in whose history force has played so large a part as in property.

Now it seems to be believed that the legitimacy or moral justifiableness of property is impaired by showing that force has marked its history and growth from the beginning, and especially it seems to be believed that property in land, the only property sufficiently permanent to run back to the times of force, can be proved unjustifiable, and its owners can be dispossessed in favor of other persons, by the power of this learned investigation; but if force proved against property proves it illegitimate,

why does not force proved against marriage prove that marriage is an unjustifiable institution? If we inherit property with the taint of all the ancient fraud and violence in the form of it, and in our ideas about it, so do we also inherit our family institutions with the taint of all the old fraud and violence in the form of them which we practise, and in our ideas about them.

The women of to-day are the true descendants of their great-grandmothers who were captured and reduced to drudgery; the men of to-day owe their ideas about women, and the women of to-day owe their ideas about themselves, largely to the traditions of the times I have mentioned. Can we inherit the world any otherwise than as it comes to us? Can we study history in the hope of going back to alter it? Can we live to-day for the sake of a sentimental attempt to redress the errors, crimes, and ignorances of the past generations? If we cannot do it with one part of the social organism, how can we do it with another?

To study history in order to observe the action of social forces and win instruction for our own undertakings of to-day and to-morrow is wise and right; to study history in order to destroy anything which cannot be shown to stand free and clear of wrong in the past is revolutionism and folly. The two procedures have not the remotest relationship to each other.

When the family consisted of a woman and her child, while the father was off hunting, fighting, or playing, the woman picked up a living for herself and her child as best she could. Property was common, that is, she had none of it; the father of her child was sharing all there was with other men. When the second grade of the family which I have mentioned above came in, things were not much better; later, however, when a woman

came to be considered a "toy" she ceased to be a drudge; when she came to be esteemed as a woman she lost value as a slave whose labor could be productively employed. Then, however, she began to get a share in the use and enjoyment of wealth, if not in the legal title to it. Then, too, her husband began to want property, not as a share in a common stock owned with his comrades, but as a possession which he could not only consume and enjoy, but dispose of and give away to the wife and children who possessed a special and lasting claim on him. Of course this distinction between participating in a momentary enjoyment of a common stock, and "having and holding" things, so as to dispose of them, is of immeasurable importance in the theory of property. What, then, is the authority for us, as regards our institutions, of any facts about property as it existed where "having and holding" was unknown? But it is plain that the development of the family was what drew in its train an imperative necessity for goods to have and to hold and to dispose of. A permanent family bond led to a permanent property title.

The most reasonable explanation of the different forms of marriage which has been proposed, due allowance being made for anomalous cases, is that they have been due to variations in the conditions of the struggle for existence. Polyandry has existed where the conditions of life have been hard, and the cost of offspring great. Polygamy has not always been expensive; where women have been drudges they have not, of course, been costly. The decline of polygamy, however, in connection with the advance of luxury, has been distinctly traceable to considerations of expense, that is to say, of property. The development and perfection of the monogamic fam-

ily is an affair of expense. As luxury grows, and the demands made on life by man on his own behalf, and on behalf of his wife and children, advance, the necessity for capital, and for exclusively appropriated capital, advances in a disproportionate ratio. Here, then, we have another series of facts bearing in the most important manner on the relations of family and property.

The monogamic family, with its legitimacy of descent, and the undivided devotion of the parents to a single group of offspring, has become the seat of family ambition and pride, reaching out in both directions. The parents have learned sacrifice for the children and pride in their success. The strain of the parents to provide education and preparation for success in life on the part of their children, and the happiness won by them from their children's success are as important as the more familiar form of family pride which is felt by children in a view back upon their ancestry. Every step in the achievement of family ambition requires property, and requires it in disproportionate measure as the expense of education and the whole standard of living rises. We hear constantly about the development of character, etc., in contrast with the accumulation of property; it is one of the crudest and most superficial of the commonplaces now in fashion; the accumulation of property is no guarantee of the development of character, but the development of character, or of any other good whatsoever, is impossible without property. It is only in transcendental visions that people use a jargon of culture in which they seem to cut loose from the limitations of fact; when they return to the level of facts it is always found that their speculations have not strengthened, but have weakened, human nature.

On the plain level of facts, then, it appears that the

possession and application of exclusively appropriated products to the advantage of specific individuals is an inevitable condition of the education and preparation of children for success in life; and that the acquisition of property consequently must absorb more and more of the zeal of civilized men as the monogamic family is more and more developed. Furthermore, in proportion as the love of parents is intensified by the development of the monogamic family, the father's mind will reach out with more intense longing to the future, and he will desire to secure his children against the ills of life so far as that can be done by a provision of capital. There are very few men, also, who ever have the power to "found a family," and who rise superior to the ambition of doing so. The tide of popular prejudice is running strongly against some of these feelings and sentiments, but where are the signs that they are felt any less intensely now than formerly? or that they are felt any less intensely in this country than in old countries?

The family sentiment is the most essentially conservative force which exists. If each generation spends itself to advance the next, we see the motive force of a constantly advancing struggle against nature. It is appalling to look at history and see how impossible it has been to maintain any regular or steady advance of this kind; families, generations, and states have gained a little for a time, and then it has all been swept away in some social convulsion. No doubt it must always be so. One generation will be sacrificed without advancing the next, but the family affection and devotion come in here to reinforce the deathless hope, and here to renew the never-ending struggle on which all civilization depends. Moreover, the family sentiment aims to hold and defend what has been achieved; it therefore often

comes in conflict with the new and rising forces, and presents itself in the guise of a conservative force which is obstructive. The family security which has been obtained, and which is guaranteed by property rights, comes to stand across the path of struggle to security for some new, and as yet unsecured, family interests.

If now there is anything in our modern society upon which we may look with complacency when we compare it with any older form of society, it is the fact that our family ambition has gained depth and solidity and sobriety. In place of court intrigues for place and rank, we have earnest and honest endeavor, maintained by wide sections of the population, employing honorable means, enjoying a reasonable hope of success, and directed toward sober and commendable ideals. In place, therefore, of the clash of sordid interests on a narrow arena, and, often enough, employing destructive means, we have a spontaneous effort of the whole mass of the population. It manifests itself chiefly in the strain to win wealth and to secure property. It is one of the marks of our time. The moralists and socialists who set themselves against it bear loudest witness to the fact that the tendency exists, and that nothing can arrest it. Their invectives against capital in the hands of those who have it are double-faced, and, when turned about, are nothing but demands for capital on behalf of those who have it not, in order that they may do with it just what those who now have it are doing with it. There are some who talk with singular fatuity about a time when men worked not to win wealth, but to get a living. When was that time? It was when they could not get a living by all the work they could do. When did they begin to work to win wealth? Just when there was a chance that by work wealth might be won.

We see, then, that the interests of property are all interwoven with family sentiments, and that this is the reason for their very great strength; also that they are interwoven, through and by the family sentiments, with the very fiber of civilization. Now comes the question: how is any one to destroy or reconstruct the doctrine of property, and the conception of the right of property, on any *a priori* or "ethical" grounds? Every one whom it is intended thus to affect will respond that you threaten the interests for which he works and lives. You tell him that he is strong by virtue of his property and that you propose to rob him of it. Why will he not use his strength to defend his interest? You threaten the future of his children, and expect that he will not defend it, although at the same time you denounce him for being so strong that he is dangerous. You assail his patrimony, and expect him to expend it for his own destruction, all out of respect to "ethics." Hitherto in history the family interest has been able to exert ingenuity sufficient not only to defeat every device which the law-makers have invented to restrain it, but also to use those very devices to attain its purposes. Yet we are gravely told now, and, in one breath, that capital never was as strong as it is now, and, in the next, that the most puerile devices are about to fetter capital and deprive it of its power.

Property is dear to men, not only for the sensual pleasure which it can afford, but also because it is the bulwark of all which they hold dearest on earth — above all else because it is the safeguard of those they love most against misery and all physical distress. It is marvelous to hear the attempts which are made to devise a theory of property as a foundation for the state or for social science. Property gives the theory to all the rest.

The reason why I defend the millions of the millionaire is not that I love the millionaire, but that I love my own wife and children, and that I know no way in which to get the defense of society for my hundreds, except to give my help, as a member of society, to protect his millions.

THE STATE AND MONOPOLY

A RECENT Russian writer has said: "It is recognized as the highest principle of economic science by the newest school in the West of Europe, that the government is under obligation to take upon itself the management of economic relations in the country, and especially to care for the interests of the lowest and least secure classes of the population. In this respect our government stands in a far more satisfactory position than the Western European governments. The civil authority amongst us has, from of old, taken the most active part in the regulation of the economic relations of the people, while, in the West, such intervention of the government in the economic life of the people constitutes one of the pious hopes of the newest school of economists, the *Katheder-socialisten*."

I do not see how the claim here put forward on behalf of Russia can be successfully resisted. If Western Europe and the United States are really to adopt the plan of regulating interests by the management of public functionaries, then they must be prepared to admit that the traditions of civil liberty, and the principles of jurisprudence, which have guided Western civilization for a thousand years, are all at fault, and that Russia has all the time been on the right track. We must come to regard the *tchinovnik*, or functionary, not as a bugaboo of Russian novels, but as the true agent of civilization. The more objectively and inductively we are disposed to study social questions, the more zealously we should apply ourselves to the study of the Russian model.

No one has ever succeeded in formulating a precept for distinguishing and defining the field of action of the state, when approaching it from the negative side. It appears to be impossible to formulate such a precept, for the cases must be decided as they arise. It is altogether a matter of expediency. As such it may be subject to general maxims, whose application to particular cases must be controlled by good sense and sound judgment. The statesman must be a man of sagacity, cultivated judgment, practical experience, broad observation, and acute perception in regard to the relation of means to ends; he cannot fill his position by doing nothing.

But if it is difficult to define the function of the state from the negative side, and to say that the state should do only this or that, what shall be said of the attempt to define it positively? If we seek to give a charter to the state, that it *may* interfere, and to found interference on "principles" of morality and expediency, we find ourselves floundering in puerilities and pedantic generalizations. Such generalizations have been put forth, and the complacency with which they are propounded, in connection with their obvious ineptitude, is among the prominent features of work in social science at the present time. It has, for instance, been said that the natural monopolies constitute a definition of the field of legitimate control by the state, and it has been repeated so often, in one form or another, that it has become a sort of current dogma, as if a solution had been found which is at least good as far as it goes. The test of any such dogma is to see whether it contains all the necessary inclusions and exclusions so as properly to mark off the ground which it pretends to define.

Life insurance is not a natural monopoly, but I suppose that no one would deny that life insurance, on

grounds of expediency, offers one of the most reasonable and proper occasions for state regulation of a sound kind. As a matter of fact, state regulation of life insurance has been outrageously abused, showing how difficult it is to execute regulation wisely and righteously even where its legitimacy may be defended. But the grounds of state regulation in the expediency of the case still remain. Life insurance is a mystery to all except those who make a study of it; one party to the contract acts ignorantly and in the dark; the equities which arise from the relation of insurer and insured are subtle and complicated, and so the insured cannot, for various and obvious reasons, defend his interests. If then the state adopts general regulations for the conduct of that business, which are germane to the nature of the business, and which will prevent the insurer from perpetrating a swindle and give confidence to the insured, we have a case where the grounds for state interference to prescribe methods and fix responsibility, are as strong as in any case which can be mentioned. It is not, however, a case of monopoly, so that the dogma of interference with natural monopolies fails to include one of the widest, most important, and least questioned of the interferences now practised by civilized states.

In preceding pages I have defined and discussed representative cases over the whole field of natural monopoly; and among the other cases it was shown that literary productions, whether books or periodicals, are cases of natural monopoly. If the state is to regulate natural monopolies, the moral grounds, and the grounds of expediency, for regulating literary productions, are stronger than those for regulating any other monopoly. The moral grounds for a censorship of the press are far stronger than the similar grounds for regulating trusts, adulter-

ation of groceries, factory ventilation, child labor, and so on, because the moral corruption of bad literature is far more destructive to social interests than the other bad things against which the other regulations guard. There is no case in which the advocates of non-interference rely so entirely on "general" principles, dogmatic abstractions, and *a priori* assumptions as when they argue in favor of freedom of the press on a general faith that, on the whole, less harm comes from liberty than from restraint. The argument for a commission to regulate "interstate" literature is a thousandfold stronger than the argument for a commission to regulate interstate commerce or telegraphs. On the Russian plan, therefore, a censorship of the press is included.

The argument for a regulation of the natural monopoly enjoyed by newspapers would be stronger still. The need for informing the people about public affairs, and informing them correctly, is most important "in order to maintain our republican institutions," an argument which is put forward as conclusive and final in innumerable other cases. A proposition might also be formulated, on behalf of which a great deal could be said, to the following effect: the state ought to see to it that every social institution which possesses power should be loaded with a corresponding responsibility. If such a rule were adopted, it would at once apply to the newspaper press, for since we have established freedom of the press, the newspapers have become a gigantic power which is capable of perpetrating, and constantly does perpetrate, wrongs against both public and private rights for which there is no remedy. Here again, therefore, we should find moral grounds for state regulation of the press.

Still again: I have spoken so far only of regulation of literature in the interests of public morality and polit-

ical instruction; but, if there are grounds for regulating the prices of railroad transportation, then there are certainly reasons for regulating the prices of books and newspapers. If the fact that a railroad is paying 10 per cent dividends is a reason why its rates should be reduced, why is not the fact that a newspaper is paying ten per cent dividends a reason why its price should be reduced? If all the trusts are to be crushed, why not begin with the Associated Press? If it is a reason to legislate on the price of a patented article that the patentee has made a fortune, why not fix the price of James's or Howell's novels? or, stronger still, of the "Franklin Arithmetic" and "Appleton's Encyclopædia"? In fact, if the argumentation on these matters which fills current literature had any sense in it, we might go on and make a serious argument, of a similar kind, to show how and why the writers of "good" books should be forced to charge enormous prices.

Now, so far as I know, nobody has dared to propose a censorship of literature, or a limitation on the freedom of the press, or state regulation of literature in general, although it is plain that such regulation would be the most obvious case for state interference on the broadest ethical grounds. The dogma that the state should interfere to regulate natural monopolies here fails because it includes too much; therefore it fails, both by inclusion and exclusion, to define the limits of state interference according to the most received ethical principles, and according to the historical practise of civilized states. It remains only a specimen of the fatuity with which current social discussion is afflicted.

When a man is ailing, the first thing which occurs to himself and his friends is that he shall "take something"; from a scientific point of view, however, the worst conse-

quence of "taking something" is that all the symptoms presented by the case, from that time on, will be the confused product of the disease and the remedy, and it will be impossible to tell which symptoms belong to which cause. Therefore all chance of a clear and careful diagnosis will be lost.

The analogy from individual disease to social disease is one of the safest that can be drawn, nevertheless I use it here only to set in more familiar light the proposition which stands on its own foundation of fact, that legislation for the purpose of attempting a remedy for assumed social disease is affected by this radical vice, *viz.*: it (the legislation) enters into the subsequent phenomena and renders extremely difficult, if not impossible, all efforts to make a correct diagnosis of the case, to tell certainly whether there is any disease or not — if any, what its character; and finally, what would be its appropriate remedy.

The most glaring case of this vicious legislation in all history is undoubtedly the English legislation about Ireland since 1880. The legislation has so entered into the case that now no data can be obtained for a reasonable study of it, in its original or independent reality, or for a judgment of the effects of the legislation by itself considered.

In our own country, the most remarkable piece of paternal legislation that has ever been passed is the Interstate Commerce Law. The political economy of railroads is as yet but very imperfectly understood. Railroads constitute a natural monopoly; such being the case, it follows that no legislation will ever make them cease to be monopolies. This observation, on its face a truism, is, like most truisms, just the thing which is oftenest forgotten, or whose significance is least frequently

apprehended. The monopoly undergoes modifications as the railroad network is extended and made more complete, running in all directions and affording all possible combinations. The monopoly comes in again, however, at later stages, in new forms, because the fundamental and irremovable grounds for it lie in the natural facts of the case.

Whether, then, we take an old country with a dense population and immense accumulations of capital, like England, or a new country, with a sparse population and an immense extent of territory, like the United States; it is not strange that this monopoly, going through the wide and rapid development which railroads have undergone during the last fifty years, should have presented economic problems which we have not yet been able to solve. It has been as much as we could do to note and keep up with the phenomena, as they have presented themselves; and when we have attempted an analysis, it has proved worthless as soon as it was made, on account of the constantly changing phases of the case. Neither is it subject for wonder that the problems presented should have differed somewhat in two countries so differently situated as England and the United States. There is every reasonable ground to believe that the differences of condition will call for differences of railroad policy. In any case, it seems to be the plain dictate of right reason, that we should not hastily interfere with the development of such a gigantic interest, under the annoyance of some temporary phase of the problem; but should get a firm grasp of the facts before attempting anything of the kind.

This we have not done, and it is certain from so much experience of the Act as we have yet had, that it was not based on any clear analysis or correct solution of the

problem. However, when such an act is passed, the effort of all concerned is to conform to it if they can; and here commences the evil effect I have described. In so far as they conform to it, the phenomena which subsequently present themselves are mixed products of the economy of railroading and of the law. Not only this, but the law also has its imposing effect upon the imagination of all concerned with the matter, and it affects all the assumptions with which they come to the study of it. This is a very common experience. After a law has been in existence for ten or twenty years, and a generation has grown up which can hardly remember anything else, it is almost impossible for them to understand what it would be to be without it. The worst ills from which civilized nations suffer to-day come from just that kind of law, unwisely adopted in the first place, but now regarded as a "bulwark of society." The Interstate Commerce Law is on the way to become just such another.

Every such law when first passed goes through a sort of honeymoon. The eyes of the whole country are upon the Executive when he makes the first appointments on the commission. The test comes when it has become an old story; when public attention has been drawn away to something else; when politics and patronage get control of this matter as of all the rest. A commission for the administration of executive business, like the Civil Service Commission, is a very different thing from a committee endowed with discretion to pass upon the interests of free and equal citizens, not being itself either executive, legislative, or judicial. Such a body will inevitably become the engine of either one interest or another against the rest, or sink into nonentity. Such a commission lacks all the guarantees of

justice and of correct civil action which we have established around our legislative, judicial, and executive institutions. Those guarantees, however, are not arbitrary; they are not playthings; they are institutions wrought out by centuries of experience to meet necessities which lie in the nature of men and in the relations of human society. There is no other view of the railroad problem which is more tenable than this: that the evils which have been experienced have come from a gradual breaking down by statute of the common-law obligations of common carriers, from which has resulted a removal of responsibility from the railroads at the same time that they were developing enormous power. The solution would then have lain in a just definition of the responsibility by law, acting under the normal and well-established institutions of our civil life.

An act of paternalism like this could not long remain without offshoots. This is the most definite result of the Interstate Commerce Act which has yet appeared, and if the actual legislation along the same lines has not as yet been great, nevertheless every one who watches legislation is well aware of the latest tendency in this direction, and ample experience warns us what to expect. No act of legislation of this kind stands by itself; its inevitable tendency to encourage similar projects must be taken into account as a part of it. Plans for "interstate" telegraph, sleeping-cars, etc., are already proposed, and a bill is before Congress for an "interstate" minimum rate of wages. Thus do the friends of a false movement unwittingly do us the favor to burlesque it.

As experience of the Act goes on, the inconsistency of its parts becomes more and more evident. The prohibition of pooling, the long and short haul clause, and the assumed distinction between local and through traffic

are inconsistent and, in part, false to the facts. The point, however, which I wish to emphasize for my present purpose is that this piece of legislation was produced by a legislative compromise of opposing "views," no view being based on anything better than popular clamor, hasty prejudice, and political ambition. Neither can any legislation of a similar kind on a cognate subject ever be produced except in the same way and affected with the same vice. In strictly political matters that fact does no great harm; but in industrial matters it is fraught with mischief.

The Interstate Commerce Act is still under trial; it is too soon to make up its record and pass judgment on its history. I have used it here only as a concrete illustration, the latest and most important of the attempts to regulate by law and administrative machinery a case of natural monopoly — perhaps the most difficult one which the experience of mankind has yet met. I have not been in a position to examine and judge of the allegations made by railroad men, especially in the Northwest, about the mischievous effects of the law; the law undoubtedly forms a convenient scapegoat on which to charge the consequences of all errors and faults. That is another evil of the law. It has seemed to me, however, that the law was rapidly working out to a dilemma like this: if the Act is interpreted as the public expect, it will do great harm to the railroad business; if the stress is laid on the saving clause about substantially equal conditions, the Act will be reduced to a dead letter.

I must reserve for another essay the connection of laws about monopoly with the coming conflict between democracy and plutocracy, which is really the most important aspect of such laws.

DEMOCRACY

DEMOCRACY AND PLUTOCRACY

One of the most difficult things to learn in social science is that every action inside of the social organism is attended by a reaction, and that this reaction may be spread far through the organism, affecting organs and modifying functions which are, at the first view of the matter, apparently so remote that they could not be affected at all. It is a more simple statement of the same fact to say that everything in the social organism displaces everything else. Therefore, if we set to work to interfere in the operation of the organism, with our attention all absorbed in one set of phenomena, and regulate our policy with a view to those phenomena only, we are very sure to do mischief. The current speculations about social policy and social reform suffer very largely from this error.

The organization of a modern civilized society is intensely high; its parts are extremely complicated. Their relations with each other are close, and all the tendencies of our time are making them closer; and the closer they are, the more surely and immediately are interferences distributed through them. The bonds of connection between them are constantly becoming more delicate and subtle; and they are sublimated, as it were, so that they escape the observation of the senses. In a simple society, even though it be on the height of the best civilization, all the parts of the organization lie bare to view, and every one can see the relations of agriculturist, transporter, banker, merchant, professional

man, debtor, creditor, employer, and employee, in their visible operation. In a highly organized society as, for instance, in a big city, those same relations have all become automatic and impersonal. They have escaped from control; they are regulated by assumptions and understandings that every one is to do so and so; that certain uniform and constant motives, aims, and desires will present themselves as long as human society endures; and that men will, therefore, continue to exert themselves in a certain manner for the satisfaction of their wants. This is what we mean by natural law, and by the field of a science of society. If any one will look over his dinner table the next time he sits down to dinner, he can see the proofs that thousands of producers, transporters, merchants, bankers, policemen, and mechanics, through the whole organization of society and all over the globe, have been at work for the last year or more to put that dinner within his reach, on the assumption that he, too, would do his work in the organization, whatever it is, and be prepared to pay for the dinner when it reaches him. All these thousands and millions of people, therefore, have co-operated with each other for the common good of all, without acquaintance or conventional agreement, and without any personal interest in each other, under the play of forces which lie in human nature and in the conditions of human existence on this earth.

Now, the organs of society do not impinge upon each other with hard and grating friction, like blocks of granite wedged together. If they did the case would be easier, for then we should have only a mechanical contact, and the relations would be of a simple order. Neither are the relations those of an orchestra, which produces harmony by voluntary co-operation under training,

according to a predetermined scheme, yet subject to the laws of harmony in sound. Nor are the relations like those of an army, where the co-operation is arbitrary, and enforced by discipline, although controlled by expediency for the attainment of an end under set conditions. The organs are elastic and they are plastic. They suffer both temporary and permanent modifications in form and function by their interaction on each other, and by the arbitrary interferences to which they are subjected by legislation or artifice of any kind. Thus, for instance, it is impossible to say how taxes will diffuse themselves; they may force a change in the immediate organ on which they fall — transporters, merchants, bankers — or they may be transmitted more or less through the organization.

It is this elasticity and plasticity of the organs of society which give the social tinker his chance, and make him think that there are no laws of the social order, no science of society; no limits, in fact, to the possibilities of manipulation by "The State."

He is always operating on the limit of give and take between the organs; he regards all the displacement which he can accomplish as positively new creation; he does not notice at all, and probably is not trained to perceive, the reaction — the other side of the change; he does not understand that he must endure a change on one side for all the change which he affects on the other. Since it is so hard to learn that exchange means exchange, and therefore has two sides to it, a giving and a taking — since, I say it is so hard to learn this, and people talk even about buying and selling as if they were independent operations, a fallacy which is itself the outcome of a high organization with a money system — then it is not strange that it should be so hard to learn that all

social change is change, has two sides to it — the cost and the gain, the price and the product, the sacrifice and the obtainment.

Hence we see one fallacy of nearly all the popular propositions of "reform": they would not be amiss, perhaps, if the change which they propose could be made and everything else remain the same.

In the proposition it is assumed that everything else is to remain the same. But it is inevitable that other things will not remain the same; they will all of them adjust themselves to the new elements which are introduced. If we make a change involving expense, taxes must be increased, and every taxed interest must undergo a change to fit it to the new conditions. I know of no reform by state agency which does not involve increased taxation.

Let us note another fact. In the advancing organization of society, the tendency is all the time to subdivide the functions, and each one is assumed by a different set of persons; thus the interests of living men and women become enlisted in all the play of the organs, and are at stake in all the legislative and other interferences. What I have called the elasticity and plasticity of the organs means in fact the rights, interest, happiness, and prosperity of the one set of human beings versus the same interests of another set of human beings. It is men who strive, and suffer, and plan, and fight, and steal, and kill, when the great impersonal and automatic forces push them up against each other, or push group against group. The tendency is all the time to go back from the industrial struggle to the military struggle. Every strike illustrates it. Better educated people, while talking about respect for law, seize upon legislation as the modern mode of pursuing the military struggle under

the forms of peace and order — that is to say, they turn from industrial competition and industrial effort to legislative compulsion, and to arbitrary advantages won and secured through the direction and the power of the state. When the strikers and Knights of Labor declare that they are going to reach after this power, they have simply determined to contend for the latest form of force by which to supersede the industrial struggle for existence by a struggle of craft and physical force. Yet there are those who tell us that this is really a supersession of the struggle for existence by intelligence and "ethical" forces, as if every page of the Congressional Record did not reveal the sordidness of the plans and motives by which it is all controlled.

Here comes in another fallacy in the philosophy of state interference. Let the reader note for himself with what *naïveté* the advocate of interference takes it for granted that he and his associates will have the administration of their legislative device in their own hands and will be sure of guiding it for their purposes only. They never appear to remember that the device, when once set up, will itself become the prize of a struggle; that it will serve one set of purposes as well as another, so that after all the only serious question is: who will get it? Here is another ground for a general and sweeping policy of non-interference. Although you may be in possession of the power of the state to-day, and it might suit you very well, either to triumph over your business rivals and competitors; or to bend to your will the social organ which stands next to you, and with which you have the most friction (as, for instance, shippers with transporters); or to see your pet reform (temperance, for instance) marching on, you would far better consent to forego your satisfaction, lest presently

your rivals, or the railroads, or the liquor-sellers, should beat you in a political struggle; and then you must suffer wrong and in the end be forced to give up industrial and persuasive methods altogether and devote your whole energy to the political struggle, as that on which all the rest depends.

Of all that I have here said, the Interstate Commerce Law is the instance which stands out in point with the greatest distinctness. The shippers and transporters, the competing railroads, the people who can extort passes and those who do not want to give them, the people at way-stations and those at competing points, and other interests also which cluster about the transportation, which is the most important element in the opening up of this great and rich continent, all clash and struggle for shares in the wealth which the people of the United States produce. The contest has phases and vicissitudes of every description. The politicians, editors, economists, *littérateurs*, lawyers, labor agitators, and countless others who, in one way or another, have something to make out of it, join in the struggle, taking sides with the principal parties, or hovering around the strife for what may turn up in it. When once the fatal step is taken of invoking legislation, the contest is changed in its character and in its arena. That is all that is accomplished; from that time on the questions are: who will get this legislative power? Which interest or coalition of interests (such as passed the bill) will get this, the decisive position in the battle, under its control? Already, in some of the Western States, the next phase has developed itself. The majority interest, by numbers, seizes the power of the state and proceeds to realize its own interest against all others in the most ruthless fashion. That capital has means of defense is unques-

tionable; that it will defend itself is certain; that it cannot defend itself without resorting to all the vices of plutocracy seems inevitable. Thus the issue of democracy and plutocracy, numbers against capital, is made up. It is the issue which menaces modern society, and which is destined to dispel the dreams which have been cherished, that we were on the eve of a millennium. On the contrary, it will probably appear that the advance of civilization constantly brings new necessity for a still more elevated activity of reason and conscience, and does not tend at all to a condition of stability, in which the social and political problems of the race would reach a definitive solution.

DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY AND PLUTOCRACY

All the words in -ocracy properly describe political forms according to the chief spring of political power in them: an autocracy is a political form in which the predominant force is the will of the monarch himself; an aristocracy is a form in which the predominant and controlling force is the will of a limited body, having the possession of the qualities which are most esteemed and envied in that society; a theocracy is a form in which the predominant force is some conception of God and his will, and, inasmuch as the will of God can come to men only through some finite channel, a theocracy easily passes into a hierocracy, in which the predominant force is possessed and wielded by a priesthood; a bureaucracy is a form in which the ultimate control of things political lies in the hands of a body of office-holders. In each case the name designates that organ which, upon ultimate analysis, is found to have the power to say what shall be and what shall not be.

A democracy, then, is a political form in which the ultimate power lies with the *demos*, the people. This mass, however, while unorganized, could not express its will or administer the affairs of the state; there has never been any state organized on such a plan. The *demos*, for political purposes, has always excluded women, minors, resident aliens, slaves, paupers, felons, etc., according to the constitution in each case; the "people," therefore, has always meant some defined section of the

population, not the whole of it. Furthermore, in any modern state, even a superficial study of the current phrases and accepted formulæ will show that the word "people" is used in a technical sense to mean, not even the whole body of legal voters, but a limited number of them. A writer who rages at the idea that there are any "classes" will, in the next paragraph, reiterate all the current formulæ about the "people," and reveal by the context that he means to distinguish the people as peasants, artisans, and uneducated persons, from the rich, the educated, and the banking, mercantile, and professional classes.

Yet the current dogmas about the rights and wisdom of the people have no truth whatever, and no moral beauty, except when they are affirmed of the whole population, without any exception whatever. The dogmas in question are not really maxims or principles of actual political life and administration; they are sublime conceptions of the undeveloped power of growth and civilization in human society. As inspiring ideals, as educational motives, as moral incentives, they have incalculable value; but then they are philosophical and academical generalities, not every-day rules of action for specific exigencies. When they are once dragged down into the mud of practical politics, and are cut to the measure of party tactics, they are most pernicious falsehoods.

For instance, the notion that a human society, acting as a whole, bringing its reason and conscience to bear on its problems, traditions, and institutions, constantly reviewing its inherited faiths, examining its experiments, profiting by its own blunders, reaching out after better judgment and correcting its prejudices, can, in the sweep of time, arrive at the best conclusions as to what is socially true and wise and just, that man can get on

earth, is a grand conception, and it is true. If the doctrine that the people ought to rule, and that the people know what is wise and right means this, it is true and fruitful. It will be noticed, however, that this doctrine implies that the people are to embrace every element in the society, including all the women and children, for in no sense could this grand consensus be true unless it was universal. It is of its very essence that the whole voice should be in it; it is its catholicity which constitutes its guarantee. If the feminine element is left out of it, its guarantee is gone; it is one-sided and imperfect; it is no longer human and social; it has sunk from the grade of a grand and inspiring conception to that of the party cry of a dominant interest. Neither is it true if the children are left out of it, for it is only in the sweep of time, after long and patient revision, that the judgments have authority. It must therefore be the work of generations to make those judgments; it is only the undying society, in its continuity and undistinguished generations, which can make them, and if they are to be true, the fire and hope of youth are as essential components as the inertness and conservatism of age.

Now, however, turn this same dogma into a maxim that peasants and artisans are the "people," that they are the depositaries of social and political wisdom, as distinguished from the sages and philosophers. Tell the young man not to worry about learning, to sneer at culture, to spend his nights on the street and his Sundays reading dime novels and the *Police Gazette*, and, when election day comes, to throw his vote so as to make a political job for himself or his friend; tell him that this is what is meant by the doctrine that the people ought to rule, and that in doing all this he will be uttering the oracles of political wisdom — then the great doctrine

has turned into one of the most grotesque and mischievous falsehoods ever imagined.

In practise, therefore, democracy means that all those who are once admitted to political power are equal and that the power lies with the numerical majority of these equal units. If then the political divisions form themselves class-wise, then the most numerous class becomes the *demos* and is the depositary of political power. For this reason if we establish a democracy and then set the classes and the masses against each other, it is the utmost treason against democracy, because it ingrafts upon it from the start the worst vices of social discord and social greed which have disgraced the older political forms.

A plutocracy is a political form in which the real controlling force is wealth. This is the thing which seems to me to be really new and really threatening; there have been states in which there have been large plutocratic elements, but none in which wealth seemed to have such absorbing and controlling power as it threatens us. The most recent history of the civilized states of Western Europe has shown constant and rapid advance of plutocracy. The popular doctrines of the last hundred years have spread the notion that everybody ought to enjoy comfort and luxury — that luxury is a sort of right. Therefore if anybody has luxury while others have it not, this is held to prove that men have not equally shared in the fruits of civilization, and that the state in which such a condition of things exists has failed to perform its function; the next thing to do is to get hold of the state and make it perform its function of guaranteeing comfort and physical well-being to all. In the mean time, with the increasing thirst for luxury and the habit of thinking of it as within the scope of every man's rights, the temptations of dishonest gain increase, and

especially are all those forms of gain which come, not from defalcation and theft, but from the ingenious use of political opportunities, put under a special code by themselves. A man who is "on the make," to use a slang phrase produced from the very phenomena to which I refer, does not think of himself as dishonest, but only as a man of the world. He is only utilizing the chances which he can get or make to win gain from the conjuncture of political and social circumstances, without intentional crime such as the statute has forbidden. This runs all the way from the man who sells his vote to the statesman who abuses official power, and it produces a class of men who have their price.

The principle of plutocracy is that money buys whatever the owner of money wants, and the class just described are made to be its instruments. At the same time the entire industrial development of the modern world has been such as to connect industry with political power in the matter of joint-stock companies, corporations, franchises, concessions, public contracts, and so on, in new ways and in great magnitude. It is also to be noted that the impersonal and automatic methods of modern industry, and the fact that the actual superintendent is often a representative and quasi-trustee for others, has created the corporate conscience. An ambitious Roman used to buy and bribe his way through all the inferior magistracies up to the consulship, counting upon getting a province at last out of which he could extort enough to recoup himself, pay all his debts, and have a fortune besides. Modern plutocrats buy their way through elections and legislatures, in the confidence of being able to get powers which will recoup them for all the outlay and yield an ample surplus besides.

What I have said here about the venality of the

humbler sets of people, and about the greed and arrogance of plutocrats, must not be taken to apply any further than it does apply, and the facts are to be taken only as one's knowledge will warrant. I am discussing forces and tendencies, and the magnitude attained as yet by those forces and tendencies ought not to be exaggerated. I regard plutocracy, however, as the most sordid and debasing form of politicial energy known to us. In its motive, its processes, its code, and its sanctions it is infinitely corrupting to all the institutions which ought to preserve and protect society. The time to recognize it for what it is, in its spirit and tendency, is when it is in its germ, not when it is full green.

Here, then, in order to analyze plutocracy further, we must make some important distinctions. Plutocracy ought to be carefully distinguished from "the power of capital." The effect of the uncritical denunciations of capital, and monopoly, and trust, of which we hear so much, is, as I shall try to show further on, to help forward plutocracy.

THE CONFLICT OF PLUTOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY

Not every rich man is a plutocrat. In the classical nations it was held that the pursuits of commerce and industry were degrading to the free man; and as for commerce, it was believed that every merchant was necessarily a cheat, that he must practise tricks from the necessity of the case, and that a certain ever-active craftiness and petty deceit were the traits of character in which his occupation educated him. As for the handicrafts, it was argued that they distorted a man's body and absorbed his mind and time, so that he was broken in spirit, ignorant, and sordid. The same ideas as to commerce and, in part, as to handicrafts, prevailed through the Middle Ages.

The classical civilization was built upon human slave power. For that reason it exhausted itself — consumed itself. It reached a climax of organization and development, and then began to waste capital and use up its materials and processes. It is, however, clear that any high civilization must be produced and sustained by an adequate force. In the case just mentioned it was human nerve and muscle. Now, modern civilization is based on capital, that is, on tools and machines, which subjugate natural forces and make them do the drudgery. It is this fact which has emancipated slaves and serfs, set the mass of mankind free from the drudgery which distorts the body and wears out the mind, at the same time producing a high civilization and avoiding the wear and tear on men.

The "dignity of labor" and the "power of capital" are therefore both products of the same modern movement. They go together; it is the power of capital which has made labor cease to be servile; it is the power of capital which has set women free from the drudgery of the grain-mill and the spinning-room; it is the power of capital which has enabled modern men to carry on mining and quarrying without misery, although in the classical times those forms of labor were so crushing that only the worst criminals or the lowest order of slaves were condemned to them. Every high civilization is unnatural, inasmuch as it is the product of art and effort. It is, therefore, unstable — ready to fall again to the original level, if the force and intelligence by which it is produced and maintained should fail. Our civilization is supported by capital and by modern science; if either of these fail — if we exhaust our capital, or if our science is not adequate to the tasks which fall upon it, our civilization will decline.

The dignity of capital is correlative with the dignity of labor. The capitalist has not simply fallen under the ban from which the laborer has escaped; the modern times have produced classes of men, masters of industry and accumulators of capital, who are among the most distinct and peculiar products of modern times. At what other epoch in history has any such class of men existed? There have, in earlier times, been great merchants, who have shown that the notion of a merchant as a man who cheats in weights and bets on differences, is a contemptible and ignorant calumny; the great masters of industry, however, are something entirely modern, and the vituperation of such a class as parasites, plunderers, speculators, and monopolists, is as ignorant and inexcusable as the older misconceptions of laborers which

have gone out of fashion. A great capitalist is no more necessarily a plutocrat than a great general is a tyrant.

A plutocrat is a man who, having the possession of capital, and having the power of it at his disposal, uses it, not industrially, but politically; instead of employing laborers, he enlists lobbyists. Instead of applying capital to land, he operates upon the market by legislation, by artificial monopoly, by legislative privileges; he creates jobs, and erects combinations, which are half political and half industrial; he practises upon the industrial vices, makes an engine of venality, expends his ingenuity, not on processes of production, but on "knowledge of men," and on the tactics of the lobby. The modern industrial system gives him a magnificent field, one far more profitable, very often, than that of legitimate industry.

I submit, then, that it is of the utmost importance that we should recognize the truth about capital and capitalists, so as to reject the flood of nonsense and abuse which is afloat about both; that we should distinguish between the false and the true, the good and the bad, and should especially form a clear idea of the social political enemy as distinguished from everybody else. The recent history of every civilized state in the world shows the advance of plutocracy, and its injurious effects upon political institutions. The abuse and the vice, as usual, lie close beside the necessary and legitimate institution. Combinations of capital are indispensable, because we have purposes to accomplish which can be attained in no other way; monopolies exist in nature, and, however much modified by art, never cease to have their effect. Speculation is a legitimate function in the organization, and not an abuse or a public wrong. Trusts, although the name is a mistake, are evidently increasing in number all over the world, and are in great measure a result

of the modern means of communication, which have made it possible for persons having a common interest, although scattered over the earth, if their number is not too great, to form combinations for the exploitation of a natural monopoly. What is gained by uncritical denunciation of these phenomena, or by indiscriminate confusion of definitions? The only effect of such procedure will be to nourish the abuses and destroy the utilities.

The first impulse is, when a social or industrial phenomenon presents itself, which is not considered good or pleasant, to say that we must pass a law against it. If plutocracy is an abuse of legislation and of political institutions, how can legislation do away with it? The trouble is that the political institutions are not strong enough to resist plutocracy; how then can they conquer plutocracy? Democracy especially dreads plutocracy, and with good reason.

There is no form of political power which is so ill-fitted to cope with plutocracy as democracy. Democracy has a whole set of institutions which are extra-legal, but are the most powerful elements in it; they are the party organization, the primary, the convention, etc. All this apparatus is well adapted to the purposes of plutocracy: it has to do with the formative stage of political activity; it is very largely operated in secret; it has a large but undefined field of legitimate, or quasi-legitimate, expenditure, for which there is no audit. As the operations of this apparatus are extra-legal they are irresponsible, yet they reach out to, and control, the public and civil functions. Even on the field of constitutional institutions, plutocracy always comes into the contest with a small body, a strong organization, a powerful motive, a definite purpose, and a strict discipline, while on the other side is a large and unorganized body, without

discipline, with its ideas undefined, its interests ill understood, with an indefinite good intention.

If legislation is applied to the control of interests, especially when the latter are favored by the facts of the situation, the only effect is to impose on the interests more crafty and secret modes of action. Mr. Adams says that, since the Interstate Commerce Law was passed, the methods of railroad men have become more base and more secret than ever before. The legislator, in further efforts to succeed in his undertaking, can only sacrifice more of the open and honest rights which are within his reach, just as the Russian Government, in trying to reach the discontented elements in its society, and crush them by severity, only puts honest people to unlimited inconvenience and loss, but does not catch the Nihilists. Under a democracy, when the last comes to the last, the contest between numbers and wealth is nothing but a contest between two sets of lawyers, one drawing Acts in behalf of the state, and the other devising means of defeating those Acts in behalf of their clients. The latter set is far better paid in consideration, in security, and in money.

I therefore maintain that this is a lamentable contest, in which all that we hold dear, speaking of public interests, is at stake, and that the wise policy in regard to it is to minimize to the utmost the relations of the state to industry. As long as there are such relations, every industrial interest is forced more or less to employ plutocratic methods. The corruption is greater, perhaps, on those who exercise them than on the objects of them. *Laissez-faire*, instead of being what it appears to be in most of the current discussions, cuts to the very bottom of the morals, the politics, and the political economy of the most important public questions of our time.

RENUNCIATION is not agreeable to any body or person, but I have expressed the opinion that democracy ought to renounce; that its prosperity and success depend upon renunciation. This needs some explanation and illustration.

In another form the same idea has often been enunciated. If we want a free government we must be content to forego a great many fine things which other civil forms might get for us. A "free government," under the democratic republican form, first of all renounces all the ceremonial and pageantry of the aristocratic or monarchical form; that is of little importance, although perhaps we assume too easily that the poetic and imaginative element is absent from a democratic community. But a democratic republic will never be neat, trim, and regular in its methods, or in the external appearance which it presents; it will certainly lack severity and promptitude of operation. A great many things are sure to be left at loose ends; in a word, there is sure to be little discipline. There is a lounging air, a lack of formality, an exaggerated horror of red tape, a neglect of regularity.

Beyond this, however, and more important, is the fact that there are important functions which older forms of the state have been accustomed to perform, which the democratic republic cannot well perform: it cannot make war without great waste and expense, both of life and money; it cannot do any work which requires high

and strict organization, and do it well — if it tries to do work of that kind, it does it only at great expense, and under great waste. Germany is the best drilled and disciplined state of modern times, while the United States is the leading example of a democratic republic. The judgments of these two countries about each other, and their influence on each other, are among the most remarkable facts in modern life. The judgments of Germans generally on the United States are those of men accustomed to an administrative system which works accurately and promptly, also pedantically and cheaply, on a system which is inaccurate and unprompt, and is not cheap; they are accustomed to respect state action, to believe in it, and to rely upon it; with a population trained to respond at the tap of the drum, uneducated to individual initiative, and with a bureaucracy of long tradition and intense training, the state may present itself as an entity of a different sort, and an agent of different power from the American State. The question then is, whether we can draw any inferences as to state functions from Germany, or whether we should be willing to see the American State undergo those changes which it would have to undergo in order to fit it to undertake all the functions which are undertaken by the German State.

This question needs only to be stated to answer itself. The especial changes which the American State would have to undergo would be to weaken democracy and to strengthen bureaucracy. These are the two changes which would be the most impossible of all which could be attempted. It is much more probable that democracy will sweep away all the bulrushes in the shape of "monarchical institutions" which are being built up against it, and, seizing upon the military organization and the state socialistic institutions as at once its prey

and its instrumentalities, will triumph over everything else, in Germany as well as elsewhere.

If we turn back, then, to the free democratic state as the state of the present and future, the one which is alone possible for us and which must go on to meet and work out its destiny, then I think it will appear that its civil service is its weakest point. The recent history of the French Republic, joined with our own, has gone far to show that a republican system with party government is drawn toward the abuse of the civil service by forces which it is folly to underestimate. One must shut one's eyes to facts if one would deny that the sentiments "I am a Democrat," " this is a Republican Administration," strike a responsive chord in the hearts of the masses, where denunciations of the corruption of the civil service, or of wasteful expenditures of public money, fall on dull ears. These watchwords, however, are only the doctrines: "To the victor belong the spoils," and "Woe to the vanquished," in a little less cynical and shocking form, and they mean that, in the modern democratic state, parties fight each other for control of the state, which they rule, having won it, like a conquered territory. If this state, then, has state-socialistic functions, it is sure to produce the worst exploitation of man by man which has ever existed; to live under it, and not be in it, would be to suffer a tyranny such as no one has experienced yet.

I should not like to be understood to speak lightly of preaching as a means of awakening the reason and conscience of men to convictions which are universally right and true. Anything which can be gained in this direction is sure to produce manifold fruit in politics and economic policy; but hitherto we have not done much against the abuse of the civil service except by preach-

ing. The statesman has to accomplish his purposes by adopting measures, and by founding institutions which can set social forces in operation, or prevent their operation. He must have an adequate means or must make the best of a case as he finds it.

In the present case, therefore, I maintain that the way to minimize the dangers to democracy, and from it, is to reduce to the utmost its functions, the number of its officials, the range of its taxing power, the variety of its modes of impinging on the individual, the amount and range of its expenditures, and, in short, its total weight; for among the other vices and errors of the prevailing tendency, this is one of the worst, that we do not see that whatever extends the functions of the state increases its weight. Against this view nothing has ever yet been brought forward but the pure assumption which has all experience against it, that, if the state should not do things they would not be done at all.

And there is another course of thought which seems to me to run in the same direction.

We often boast that this is an age of deliberation, and it is, of course, true that, as compared with any earlier period, men of the most civilized states do act by deliberation where formerly they acted by instinct. It is, however, still true of even the most enlightened community which could be found, that the mass of the people in it live by instinct. The torments of always giving one's self a reason, satisfactory to reason and conscience, for everything one does, are a privilege of high culture. The ancient philosophers never got further than the question: what is the highest good in life? The modern thinking world reached so high as to spend a year, perhaps, in debating whether life is worth living. That was certainly a proud triumph; the mass of man-

kind, however, are contented and eager to live without deliberating about it.

Now democracy calls for a great amount of deliberation and reflection from the mass of mankind; and especially, if we are determined not to follow the policy of letting things work themselves out, but are determined to exert ourselves upon them, according to ideals which we have formed, then the democratic state is destined to make bigger and bigger demands upon the reflective power of its citizens. If it does so, it will fail to get the response which it expects. Once more the path of wisdom seems to lie in making the demands of the state as few and simple as possible, and in widening the scope of the automatic organs of society which are non-political, in order to see whether they will not prove capable, if trusted.

When we are told that the state would do all things better, if we would give it more things to do, the answer is that there is nothing which the state has not tried to do, and that it has only exceptionally performed anything well, even war or royal marriages, and that, on the contrary, here in the United States, where the other policy has had more trial than anywhere else — favored, it is true, by circumstances — it has proved beneficent in the extreme. Therefore, if, after all, it is only a question of whether to put faith in the state or to put faith in liberty, an educated American ought not to hesitate long which to do.

SEPARATION OF STATE AND MARKET

I CANNOT find an example of a state which has not been, in a great measure, subject to the power of capital. It is impossible to live and to carry on any enterprises of utility or pleasure, without capital; those who denounce capital most earnestly bear plainest testimony to this; they are squirming about in an effort to escape from, or to turn their backs on, this fact. Hence men have always struggled to get possession of this power. Those who had state power found capital indispensable; they made alliances with those who had it. The latter made terms under which they accomplished their own ends, and satisfied their own tastes. If any examples can be found to the contrary, they are great and powerful despotisms, which were strong enough to disregard all but a military caste, or a priesthood, but even in these cases the power of capital made itself felt indirectly through its influence on the oligarchy which maintained the throne.

I cannot find a case of any state in which the ruling element really practised abnegation of power, or showed a disposition to deprive itself of functions. If democracy contains any great hope for mankind, it lies in the belief that democracy is to distinguish itself from all other forms of the state in this respect. Jeffersonian democracy, by its most important dogmas and maxims, seemed to justify this hope, and if it has won any triumphs, it has won them by this policy. It was not afraid to be

called non-government or "atomistic." The old *Congressional Globe* bore the motto: "The world is governed too much." Jeffersonian democracy, however, in its best estate, was able only partly to fulfil its own ideal, for it found that a state power which undertook to live by the principles of self-abnegation could not simply rest at ease or be quietly neutral. It had to defend itself against the forces which tried to direct it, and to push back against the organizations which were trying to drive it on to the undertakings which it disavowed. In the latest developments of democracy, the world over, there is very little of this reluctance to assume functions.

By *imperium* the Romans meant the concept of military and civil power combined in a supreme authority. Every government aims to develop and maintain this conception in its chief organ as a realized fact, and democracy is no exception. The "people" — that is the ruling majority for the time being — instead of divesting itself of any part of the traditional functions of the civil authority, is notably tenacious of everything which it imagines to be "sovereignty"; and it resents any curtailment, as if such curtailment would contain an imputation upon the equality of democracy with the other -ocracies which have had the powers. So we are gravely told that "the state is the depository of the coercive power of society"; as if that was an intelligible proposition, or one embodying a distinct notion applicable to any question of theory or any problem of practise. It is upon such turgid and empty dicta that all absolutism has been built up in the past; and such are now being fabricated with a zeal hitherto unequaled for the purposes of democratic absolutism. Indeed, we seem destined speedily to discover that democracy, instead of being a single

and homogeneous system, is a thing of such various phases and forms that it is scarcely possible to compare two cases of it, or that such a definition can be made that two commentators can understand each other.

Democracy is atomistic. It breaks the society up into individuals who are political units. The peril of such a system is that it is at the mercy of any organization formed inside of it which gives coherence and order to its disintegrated elements. Such an organization will begin to move the whole. To understand the significance of this, let us here bring another set of observations into the scope of our study.

Status holds down individual energy and power. If a black man is told that the only status allowed by social institutions to him is that of a slave, no black man can work out into realization the powers which he may possess. If the status of women is fixed by custom and law, no woman can show her power to do anything outside of the limits. The social arrangement which sets free individual energy is liberty; for under this each one may prove what he is by what he does, and the society profits by the expansion and evolution of all the power there is in it. Now democracy and liberty are not the same thing by any means; but, in the latest history, they have been closely allied with each other, and democracy as a political form has helped and been helped by liberty in the social order. The product of liberty and democracy is individualism. Under it men have been emancipated from tradition, authority, caste, superstition, and to a certain extent from prejudices and delusions; if we could maintain liberty and democracy long enough, we might perhaps produce individualistic results so great that men would be emancipated from delusions and from phrases.

This movement, however, like every other, has its perils and abuses. If individualism destroys institutions, and if democracy, with its dream of equality, simply works disintegration, the society is at the sport of the new elements which combine and organize on new centers, for actual disintegration and atomization of society is impossible.

What then are the centers on which the new organizations form, and what is the character of the new organizations? In our modern society they are sure to be interests, meaning by that, groups of persons united by a desire for the success of the same enterprises and seeking pecuniary gain from that success. Here is where the plutocratic element finds entrance into the democratic system, and here lies the weakness of democracy, in the face of the plutocratic forces with which it has to cope in modern society.

What, in the face of such an antagonism, is the significance of this new notion that "the state is an ethical person" — a triviality in the guise of an apothegm? If the state is an ethical person, and is rent by interests which may be sordid, and are at best commercial, what becomes of its ethical authority, and how can its ethical character abide? In order to save its own existence — not its ethical character, but its purely brute existence — it has to take sides with some interests against others, which is just what all modern civilized states are doing.

And yet, as I said at the outset of this essay, it has seemed not impossible that democracy might contain within itself the form and potency of better things. It has seemed that it might be simple-minded enough to throw off all the big dogmas of state-olatry, might be so open and visible, and might feel itself so well known of

all men, that it should laugh down all inflated theories of itself; might be so hard-headed as to treat all political mysticism with contempt; might be so practical that it would know better than to try to do too much, or to busy itself with schemes of universal happiness.

The first condition of its fulfilling any such hope is that it shall renounce. It is the strongest system that has ever existed when it is achieving peace, order, and security; it is the weakest system that ever existed when it attempts to turn its force to industrial or social objects, and it forfeits strength in the former field by all its attempts in the latter. The state is the greatest monopoly of all; it can brook no rival or colleague in its domain; it is necessarily sole and supreme. If the state is purely a civil organization this monopoly character of it is beneficial; if, however, the state enters as an agent into the industrial or social relations of its own subjects, it becomes the greatest and worst of all monopolies, the one best worth having under one's control, the best prize of base struggles, and the most powerful engine by which some men may exploit others.

The most notable product of democracy, especially of American democracy, up to this time, is the maxim of the separation of church and state. There have been strong efforts at times in this country to formulate a maxim of the separation of the state and the market. It is to that policy that democracy ought to come, if it can command the wisdom and the will to attain to it; it would thereby cut the ground from under plutocracy. Plutocracy, as we have seen, consists in the political power of capital. If capital were excluded from all interest in state action, and thrown upon the laws of the market, there would remain only that power of capital which is rooted in the industrial and social order,

which nothing can set aside or overcome. If there were no longer any legislative monopolies nor any legislative guarantee of natural monopolies, the only monopolies which would remain would be such as no one can abolish.

SOCIAL WAR IN DEMOCRACY

It is one of those popular assumptions of our time which, although never distinctly formulated, have such an important part in all our accepted faiths, that social forces change in the progress of civilization, so that, for example, slavery and feudalism pass away completely. The students of social history, however, find that social forces are ever the same; only the phenomena present themselves under new combinations. It is when this fact forces itself upon the observation of men in spite of their pet dogmas, that we hear about the "labor problem," or "wage slavery." Men toss and heave and squirm, changing their position from generation to generation; they have always just got, or are about just to get, the final and completely satisfactory solution, and they find that the hardships of life, the difficulty of getting a living, the task of rearing children, pain, disease, and death, remain about the same. The new discovery, instead of annihilating ills and closing the account of earthly hardship, proves only the point of departure for new ills unknown before; and the old ills brighten as they take their flight, for their unappreciated advantages come to light.

Let us notice how class struggles have run through modern history and see what the position of democracy is in respect to class struggles and social war.

The feudal system properly had only two classes, nobles and peasants; kings were differentiated from nobles and they made a breach in the system. In Russia

and Poland these three classes fought it out, and the difference in the results has a value for the student of political class struggles which no one has yet, to my knowledge, developed. In Russia the crown won; the nobles never became "nobles" in the Western sense; the peasants were reduced to serfdom as mere pawns in the game. They always maintained a tradition that the Czar had subjected them to servitude under the nobles that the latter might fight for the fatherland — a capital instance of what comes of sacrificing private rights to "the greater good of the state." In Poland the crown was subjugated to the nobles, and then the latter developed a tyranny over the peasants far worse than that of Russia, and reduced their country first to anarchy and then to foreign conquest.

In Western Europe another class was differentiated from the two classes of feudalism — the middle class, the *bourgeoisie* of the cities. This made four classes, and political history has been moulded by their alliances and conflicts. The middle class was at war with feudalism; while the lords were strong the monarchs and cities combined against them. In Germany the crown could not win a real victory, while in France and Spain it did do so. In England the four classes came to a compromise and adjustment under the Constitution, but their rubbing against each other has marked the history of that country for five hundred years.

Now, if we have a democratic republic, the crown disappears out of it. If the economic situation is that of a new country, with sparse population and an abundance of land, there are no nobles, and in an older country, under the democratic republican form, there cease to be any nobles. Titles are a mere matter of courtesy and have only social value. There remain then only two

classes, the *bourgeoisie* and the peasantry, and these undergo very important modifications. The high *bourgeoisie* develops into a class of wealth and luxury, supplanting, imitating, reproducing with variations, the old baronage; it struggles to form out of itself a patriciate — a body of selected families defined by its own sympathies and voluntary recognition, or a body of locupletes or optimates, or a timocracy of those who have enjoyed the honors of the state. The process has been repeated so often in the classical states, in the Italian republics, and in the rich cities of the Middle Ages that it ought to be sufficiently familiar to us. The force at work is plainly the trait of human nature which leads men to gratify their vanity, to seek to excel, to try to guarantee the future of their children, and to secure the fruits of their own efforts. Like all other traits of human nature, it has its good side and its bad side.

On the other hand the modern representatives of the ancient peasantry are very different from their predecessors. The middle class is constantly fed from them at the bottom. A class of yeomen farmers or peasant proprietors has little in common in its status, its fund of ideas, or its outlook, with mediæval peasants. There are no peasants in the modern Western world with whom the other classes can play, or whom they can afford to disregard.

In this matter also the modern statesman is all ready to act. The chip which floated on the current thought that it made the river go; so statesmen and political philosophers think that they make institutions and mould history. The thing which makes and breaks institutions is economic forces, acting on the interests of men, and, through them, on human nature. The statesman who goes along with these forces, wins great "triumphs"; but

he is like the chip on the current, after all; the most that he does is to show in which direction it is going. Now the cheapening of transportation between the great centers of population and the great outlying masses of unoccupied land is the greatest fact of our time, and it is the greatest economic and social revolution which has ever taken place. We, of this generation, are the first ones to see the real effects of the discovery of America beginning to operate on the whole social system of the Old World. Through the reduction in the rent of land there, the present forces are undermining and will presently sweep away the whole class system built upon the competition of a dense population for a limited area of land. The fall in rent, the obliteration of social distinctions, the decline of aristocracy, the rise of democracy, the subdivision of great estates, the rise of peasant proprietors, are all consequences of the economic revolution — consequences which no statesman or philosopher has made or can prevent; but there will, no doubt, be a great number of conventions held and innumerable "resolutions" will be passed "approving" of the change, and thereby claiming to have caused it; and the world will be enriched by a number of great statesmen who will be credited with having made it all.

A land-owning peasant class and a property-owning middle class do not appear likely to go to war with each other. On the contrary, the social combinations which must arise under the new order of things are already discernible: it is plainly the antagonism of those-who-have and those-who-have-not which is to rise out of the social residuum, when kings and nobles and old-fashioned peasants are gone; and the middle class, covering a wider compass between its extremes, is left alone. It is then that the test of democracy and of the current political

philosophy must come. With a proud and powerful plutocracy on one side, and a hungry proletariat on the other, can democracy find resources anywhere for controlling the elements of human greed and passion? A plutocracy wants to obtain free swing for its powers through and over the social organization. It wants, above all, security and guarantees for what-is, for what-has-been-accomplished for capital and accumulated wealth. The proletariat wants free swing for the forces of new creation, for what-is-to-be,for the unaccomplished. The former wants quiet enjoyment, the latter wants free chance for enterprise.

It is an easy thing, now, to get a majority to vote that the capital-which-is belongs to the chances of the new effort for what-is-to-be, and to resolve accordingly that those-who-have-not, belonging to the party of enterprise and of the future, ought to, and of right must take possession of the capital now "detained" by the party of the past and of the thing-accomplished, in order to go on with progress. We have already had an abundance of philosophers profound enough to prophesy this unto us; but when these notions turn from the precepts of philosophers into the program of parties under a democracy, we see that the old social war is not over. It is not settled: the old evils are not abolished; the passions are not stifled — they are all here under new forms. The robbery of a merchant by a robber baron, the robbery of an investor by a railroad wrecker, and the robbery of a capitalist by a collectivist, are all one. Democracy as a political form, instead of settling anything, has set them all loose; what, now, should be and can be its policy toward them? If it stands away from them, only insisting on peace and order and upon submission by everybody to the administration of rights according to

contract, then the landlord who finds that his rents fall, or the railroad investor who gets no dividends, or the producer who is dissatisfied with the price which his product brings, will have no recourse except each against himself. He will have to learn more, and to become wiser. Inasmuch as this would call reason and conscience into play, there might really be some hope that we might gain something toward doing away with social war; but that democracy can solve the antagonisms in the newest order of things, can adjust the rights of the contending interests by a series of "ethical" decisions, or that it can, by siding with one party, give it a victory over the other, and thereby found a stable social order, it is folly to believe.

ECONOMICS AND POLITICS

[1905]

WHAT is the chief economic problem of the present time? It would be difficult to say. The question reminds me of the time when I asked a class in political economy what is the first great requirement which a territory must fulfil in order to become the seat of a thriving colony. The answer which I wanted was that it must furnish an article of export in high demand in the country from which the colonists are to come. At last one man replied: "Hard money and free trade." My own view of the economic future is optimistic in the highest degree. I believe that the twentieth century is to see an increase of economic power far beyond anything which men have heretofore experienced; and by "economic power" I mean power over nature to extort from it supplies for the material needs of men. The developments in the application of electricity exceed any foresight of ours; the power of falling water will be applied to economize the consumption of coal; it seems now that the discovery of the radio-active substances may prove to be the greatest of all discoveries yet made by man. These and other similar facts in the economic outlook promise great increase in wealth in all departments of productive activity. Especially it seems that the rewards of talent and highly skilled effort will be such as our fathers would have thought fabulous. What is there to frustrate or hinder the economic benefits which the future seems to offer?

By the side of economic effort there always go questions of policy about which the producers must agree if they are to work with success. According to present-day systems, the questions of policy are put under the control of a set of men other than the producers — the politicians and statesmen. My optimism in regard to the economic outlook is equaled only by my pessimism about the political outlook. I will not venture to say that the relation between economics and politics is the greatest problem of the present moment, but it is a very great question, and it is to that that I invite your attention.

Let us note at once that it is not a new question; it is as old as the simplest forms of political organization. In the simplest agriculture the workmen cannot manage their own industry; they need to be told by their chiefs when to sow and when to harvest. The simplest organization is regulated by the political heads, and by them the trading is done, or expeditions are organized to go and get supplies. When irrigation is necessary, public control becomes necessary for more important reasons. There must be co-operation on a grand scale and the different steps must be brought into due relation. Ultimate success for all depends on the knowledge and good judgment with which these questions of policy are decided.

In our own society the legislator is needed to give to customs and usages definite form and sanction. He becomes the guardian of public or common interests, especially in regard to franchises, privileges, and compulsory powers. Here the delicacy of his function becomes apparent, for he creates and grants privileges and overrides private rights and individual will in the name of a public interest. It is necessary that he should do so — we do not see how the public necessity and convenience can be served without giving this power to the legislature.

The natural man, when endowed with this power, is very apt to look at it as a New Haven councilman did, whom I heard say, in the lobby of the city hall, when a street railroad question was pending: "It is very queer that we are making this thing and giving it away, and that we do not get any of it." The fact that the city council did not make the franchise was only a trifling mistake; the philosophy of the situation, as it appeared to an uneducated man, endowed with political power, was the important point.

It is a universal rule that he who needs protection, and accepts it, falls into subserviency under dominion. The chiefs who regulated industry under the system which I have referred to, came to be regarded as the owners of the land. They claimed a share in the product and exacted gifts and tribute. In higher civilization it came about that kings, priests, and nobles assumed the function of deciding quarrels which arose between producers, or in the market; and they got large fees for this function. To regulate the production became an easier way to get a share in the product than to participate in such production. The political functionaries got a very large share by magnifying their office.

In our modern state the function of organizing and regulating industry has lost none of its importance. The impersonality of modern industry has increased the importance of all the rules by which the parts of the industrial organization are held in harmonious relations. The interests have been subdivided, multiplied, and recombined into new and intricate relations, and of course the rights and duties have followed parallel lines of refinement and complication. The dependence of industry on political action has become greater and greater. Industry looks to the political organization for security,

peace, and established order; these constitute a status which is to industry the atmosphere of life. Franchises and privileges have not grown less important but more important. Our way of developing and using them is by joint-stock companies, which lessen the individual risk and increase the impersonality. Our laws and institutions assume with great *naïveté* that the legislators are to be disinterested persons, no one of whom will ever make the reflection which I quoted from the New Haven councilman. They are assumed to act without interest or passion in the name of pure justice, and the disbursement of franchises and privileges is supposed to be for the public interest only. It is, however, true of every constitutional state, at the beginning of the twentieth century, that there are two ways of getting a share in the product of industry — to help to make it, and to help to regulate the making of it; get at it through economics or through politics. Every great state has, within a generation, had a great scandal from the action of its political organs on its industry; and democratic republics offer especial opportunities for the legislature to levy tolls on industry.

If we confine our attention to our own country we know that every legislature which meets contains a set of men who are in politics for what they can make out of it. But every industry must be carried on under the conditions which are created for it by the laws of the state; and if it is a large industry, or a new one, it will need legislation for itself — it will need compulsory powers, franchises, etc. Here is where the aforesaid set of men may impinge upon the situation. In England the method of granting compulsory powers is very careful of all vested interests; the consequence is that the expense of getting powers is so great as to be prohibitory on all small enterprises. This is a standing difficulty on that

side of the subject. The more anxious and careful the limitations by which the grant of powers is surrounded, the more expensive it must be and the more opportunity is offered for rivals to bar the way of anything new.

In our time, also, great care and attention are given to the ethical questions which arise from the adjustment of interests, and the just balancing of rights. Ethical questions always open grand opportunities for declamation and poetical generalizations, as well as for close analysis and correct deduction. Wagner [1] says that "the social question comes from a consciousness of a contradiction between the economic development and the social ideal of liberty and equality which is being realized in political life." If that is true, then it is no wonder that the social question is so hard to understand, and so enduring. Economic development is sure to come into collision with all "ideals," because economic development is hard and real and ideals are fantastic and unreal. The political ideals of liberty and equality are amongst the most fantastic of all. Such contradictions between ideals and realities surround all our discussions; trades-unionism presents many of them; they threaten the security and the peaceful development of our economic interests. The ethical questions afford a grand arena for the well-disposed bystanders who want to have a share in the discussion although they have no immediate interest in it; they generally contribute many phrases and watchwords of vague sense and wide application, if they have any application at all. Our politics are full of such watchwords and phrases which are of great utility on the stump, and many of them are carried over into economics. There is no reason at all to expect that economic development will ever come into harmony with

[1] Lehrbuch der politischen Ökonomie, 2d edit., p. 36.

the political ideals of liberty and equality. There is no sense at all in the talk we hear about "democracy of industry." Industry is carried on by talent, which is select and aristocratic. It is work, in regard to which men are, from the outfit which they possess and the conditions under which they work, unequal and unfree. We have inherited from the last two centuries a great stock of undigested notions which affect our minds whenever social topics come under discussion. These notions keep us from seeing realities. We have a school of publicists whose discussions consist in a reiteration of pet phrases and watchwords, which never contain more than a small fraction of truth.

We must also notice that the men who engage in economic enterprises are divided by their interests, and the parties to the several interests, if they are defeated in the economic struggle, have another chance in politics. They assail the legislature with loud complaints of their rivals and opponents, and demand that the power of the state shall be used to alter the conditions of industry or to make rules which will limit their rivals. The whole modern industrial organization is full of these conflicts of interests. The ethical elements in them are never simple; they generally depend at last on the most recondite and delicate play of economic forces and individual talent. When the legislator tries to deal with them so as to do "justice," he never has the case before him as it is before the mind of a party to the quarrel. In fact it is not possible that he ever could gain such knowledge of it. Some one aspect of the question fills his mind, and it is his prejudices and prepossessions which determine which aspect will win his attention; then he enacts something from the standpoint which he has adopted, and does wrong to all other interests. At any moment

of time the men-on-the-curbstone and the newspapers have a set of feelings in their minds. Just now it is a notion that some men are becoming too rich; that we are threatened by the tyranny of corporations; and that the great masters of industry need restraint. This is dignified with the name of public opinion and the will of the people, which it is not only erroneous but wicked to contradict. This is the tyranny which we need to fear: the tyranny of a vague impression, held by everybody and by nobody, impossible to formulate or argue, but endowed with authority. A public man who catches it up, and pretends to satisfy it, gets excessive power without any real responsibility. All sorts of schemers hide behind these floating notions and use them for their interests in the battle with other interests, just as the walking delegate blackmails a contractor and dupes the loyalty of his followers. If we are very angry and mean to hit somebody, the next thing to do is to find out who is our enemy.

The reason why my political pessimism offsets my economic optimism is that I cannot see how, under existing conditions, industry can be set free from political control, and I do not see how economics and politics can be reconciled so that industry can prosper and law can be respected, both at the same time.

All our social order consists of institutions, customs, and usages in which old conflicts of interest have been reduced to harmony. Men have fought them out and reached adjustments which were equitable. Our courts of justice, our financial institutions, our methods of trade, and our schools of all grades are examples of social harmonies which found their form by long conflict, and settled down to smooth action by custom. The financial institutions and the methods of trade belong to the eco-

nomic system. The system of production is modern and new. There are still conflicts in it which have not been harmonized. According to modern usages, if any one is not suited in the existing system he cries out and complains. He turns to the political authority and wants a law passed to protect him from the stress or strain which he feels. The legislator responds, but he has had very poor success in his attempts to adjust equitably the conflicting rights and interests. He has not successfully imitated any of the old social harmonies, produced by long and patient struggle and endurance.

If you will recall the first appointment of the federal Railroad Commission you will remember that a decision of the Supreme Court of the United States had just opened for us a new page over the top of which was written "Interstate Commerce." The appointment of a Commission was no settlement of anything; we have been trying to find out, ever since its appointment, what the Commission is to do, what it can do and ought to do. You know what has been written on that page headed "Interstate Commerce," and we are only at the beginning of it yet. We know that there is no commerce which is not, or may not at any moment become, interstate commerce. When the first Commission was appointed we scrutinized the list to see whether the men deserved confidence. This winter we have been told that there is only one man on the Commission who is fit and competent to be there.[1] If that is true, then it only illustrates the way in which administrative commissions run down when public attention is diverted from them. If a good man is appointed, the railroads presently invite him to come over to them, and they give him two or three times the salary. At the same time

[1] New York Times, January 31, 1905.

that the Commission was appointed measures were taken to abolish passes on railroads. Another evil was to be cured by law. On February 4, last past, the newspapers brought us reports of a speech by President Stickney of the Great Western Railroad, in which he said that everybody from the President of the United States down to college professors had gone on using all the passes they could get, although it is a criminal offense to use one. In the period which has elapsed since the Commission was appointed, the Supreme Court has rendered a number of decisions which seemed to have far-reaching effects on transportation interests, but not one of them is known to have really affected the situation to any important degree. No sooner is a point settled by legislation or a judicial decision, than the threatened interests plan to secure themselves against its effects. They have in their service the ablest men under the largest pay; they find means to attain their purposes. We must expect that they will do so. Their wishes, and the means they possess to satisfy their wishes, are a part of the case with which we have to deal. The Commission, however, will not be abolished. There will be no abandonment of the policy of regulating interstate commerce. Things do not work that way. We rarely reach a conviction that we have made a mistake and turn back and give it up; we try to develop and complicate the contrivance and to put more steam into it. The political regulation, having failed to make everybody happy, is to be re-enforced and the two parts of the industrial system, the economic and the political, are to enter into a fight with each other.

It would be very interesting, if it were possible, to trace the growth of a popular conviction; newspapers and magazines sometimes try to produce one and fail. Then

again, they succeed in producing alarm and a belief that something is wrong. Next comes the popular conviction that something must be done — Daniel Webster once said that the belief that "something must be done" is the parent of very many bad measures. Next some legislators take the matter up in order to win the capital which may be got from early leadership of a popular measure. What is the real value of such a conviction that "something must be done," if it really has been produced? How many people entertain it? What are their grounds for it? These questions need only be asked in order to show how vague and untrustworthy is the alleged "popular demand" as a ground of action. In the last weeks the House of Representatives has acted on an assumed demand that a commission should be created which should have power to fix freight rates, and on February 3 last the House set out to create such a power. How did they do it? They took up again the methods which they have developed for doing what the leaders of the party in power have decided shall be done — they held a caucus of the ruling party. They decided that there should be no debate, thus refusing to hear argument on the merits of the proposed act; they cut off the power to amend it; they suppressed with scorn and ridicule such opposition as developed in the caucus.

They thus renounced all the methods of legislative action which we inherited with legislative institutions as necessary to wise action. Then they adopted a rule of order by which to force the bill through the House. As there was some opposition, the Speaker took the floor and declared that the House had simply got to pass this bill, and that was all there was to it. "There must be harmony in the Republican party, and the party must get together and do something." Of course this was

the appeal which, as we all know, moves the Congressman; an argument as to economic loss or gain may not reach him, but party interest is the supreme motive. The unanimity of the vote proves nothing as to the convictions of Congressmen on the measure, but only as to the excellence of the party discipline. When the question came up before the House, the Democrats complained that they were only allowed to propose a single substitute, to which Mr. Dalzell replied: "The generosity of the Republican party is demonstrated in its letting the Democrats propose any substitute at all." [1] That is, of course, the final point in that theory of our institutions. The victorious party in an election is regarded as having conquered the country; it takes the spoils and gives or allows to the minority as a boon, given in contempt, what it sees fit.

There is nothing new in all this. We have seen it grow up and take shape within a generation. I do not now speak of it because I want to criticize the political tendencies of today, but because I want to come to this question: What reasonable ground is there to expect that out of this method of political action any contribution to the wise solution of economic questions can come? There is no reason to expect it. On the contrary, we can only expect that all political interference will disturb and complicate economic problems.

I am a pessimist as to the political future because I do not believe in these methods of action on questions which affect complicated interests and rights. I have said above that, in the past, the interests threatened by laws and decisions have succeeded in warding off harm. I do not doubt that they will do it again, but that means that, in the long run, they will corrupt the political insti-

[1] New York Times, February 7, 1905.

tutions of the democratic republic. The harm is not all, therefore, on the side of the economic interests. I see no force in modern society which can cope with the power of capital handled by talent, and I cannot doubt that the greatest force will control the other forces. Our political institutions are based on the assumed power of numbers; the popular orators are all the time telling us what the "people" can do, when they arise in their might. The people have made for us what we now have, and in that we can easily see that great masses of men have no power until they are organized and led. They take notions into their heads which may be good or bad, but for the regulation of industry we want good notions only, and good notions do not come haphazard to great crowds of men. They come only to men of talent as a result of study. However, as things go now, the men on the side of numbers (democracy) affect to dislike talent and to ostracize it from political influence, while those on the side of capital (plutocracy) seek out talent and enlist its services at high wages. I cannot doubt what the effect of this selection on democratic political institutions will be. We may already see the corruption coming. We are, in fact, already governed by individuals and oligarchies; in every state in the Union the half-dozen men can be named who decide what may be done and what may not be done. The same is true in Washington. In other words, the numbers have given away their power or have allowed it to be taken from them. That is just what they have always done before in every case of democracy under the republican form. We have no democracy now; all the institutions are broken down; they are turned into oligarchies. The captains of industry and other great leaders in industrial enterprise do not mind this, for it gives them something

which they can deal with better. Some years ago I met, in Germany, a German who was doing business in Russia. I asked him if it was not hard to carry on business there under the interferences and exactions of the police. "Oh, no!" said he, "it is much better than here in Germany. If there is a regulation there which bothers you, you arrange to pay so much to the police, and you hear no more of the regulation. Here in Germany, if they put a regulation on you, you have to obey it." I cannot agree, however, with that estimate of things. It is short-sighted; it is certain to reach its own limit. If we want to go on and prosper indefinitely, we must have energy and enterprise in economics, with few and good laws, just courts, and honest police. What we want good laws and good government for is not to keep the masters of industry from doing wrong, but to hold the parts of the industrial organization in harmony. The system of preventing a man from doing wrong by setting another to watch and control him is false, because the whole community would have to be turned, at last, into a great series of watchers and watched, and wickedness would flourish more than it does now.

Let me call your attention to another fact which seems to me to mark the using up of our political institutions. If we have a tribunal established to fix freight rates, we may call it a "court," but it will have to decide economic questions, not judicial questions. It cannot be a court. We shall call it so, in order to try to get for it the prestige which now belongs to the most unspoiled part of our political system. The only similar institution known to me is the Irish court for fixing rents. The economic parallel between rents in Europe and freight rates in America is very close and real. Rates are prices; they result from a conflict of interests; and the conflict is

intricate because many interests enter into it. Freight rates are the rate of return on capital invested and work done by the railroad company and they enter into the cost of production of the shipper. They also affect the relative profits of big shippers and little shippers and the relative prosperity of towns and ports. Freight rates are, therefore, in our country, a means of distributing returns on industry. In our present industrial organization, liberty is so great that the gains which are won conform to the degrees of talent which are put into the work. That is the proper result of liberty; it lets every force produce its due result. It is, therefore, at war with equality. But our statesmen want to produce equality; they dream of establishing conditions under which the little man shall stand equal with the man of genius. This they never can do without sacrificing liberty, and all the laws which are proposed aim to limit liberty by taxation, or the authority of a commission, or by special duties arbitrarily imposed. The statesman must always, in his laws, act upon an assumed state of facts, and he must always prescribe the same line of action for all cases. His enactments, therefore, act as limitations and trammels. But all our modern power and greatness has been developed under liberty. It is by setting free all the powers in the society that all of them have been developed up to the highest pitch and that the economic achievements have become so great. Then the men of ability who have led in the labor become great capitalists while other men remain poor. But that is offensive to the taste for equality and we hear endless lamentations over it. My argument does not require that I should deny that the masters of industry are often masterful, arrogant, and overbearing; I am told that they are so and I am quite ready to believe it; it belongs to their

type of character that they should be so. It seems to me, however, that we cannot spare them, and we cannot expect to make them work in strait-jackets. I think that the liberty which has allowed all our great achievements is also the best for each of us in his place and way, and I regard the passion for equality as a vice of our age.

In daily practise the relation between economics and politics does not trouble us much. It is only when the statesmen propose to make a new and great interference with the industrial conditions that their acts reach the mass of us. In general we enjoy great opportunities of industrial and professional activity. We can earn a good living and accumulate some savings. We have very little occasion to feel, in personal experience, the interference of the political system. We live in a new country, under easy conditions, and the mistakes of our legislators fall only on the wide margin of opportunity which is at our disposal but not yet used. Taxation amongst us is very unjust, and falls very unequally on persons and property; but in general our attitude in regard to that seems to be that the "least said the soonest mended." In the twentieth century, however, our peculiar position as a new country will, in great measure, pass away. The dogmas of political optimism which we have inherited from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries will be put to new tests which they cannot stand, when conditions are changed. It is now evident that our political institutions are to be put under great strain by the attempt of the United States to act as governor, patron, and receiver for the rest of America. Our institutions cannot meet such a strain, for they were planned for a confederation of petty agricultural republics. They might have sufficed for a republic of industrial interests and unambitious citizens, but they will not

suffice for an imperial world-power. We shall have to choose between the Monroe Doctrine and the Constitution of 1787. The political power will be extended and integrated. It will be of more importance economically. A clique which can control the federal government will have a power of self-aggrandizement which no men have ever had yet. It is this outlook on the future which is opening before us which made the subject of economics and politics seem to me worth attention at this time.

THE POWER AND BENEFICENCE OF CAPITAL

THE POWER AND BENEFICENCE OF CAPITAL

[1899]

Some years ago I listened to an address by a social agitator who said: "I can get along with anybody in my audiences except these mean, stingy, little fellows who have saved up a few hundred dollars in the savings bank and then have borrowed enough more to build a little house of two tenements, one of which they rent. When I begin to talk about interest, and rent, and Henry George, they get up and go out by the whole seat-full at a time." The statement was the most eloquent recognition I ever heard of the power and beneficence of capital. It has always remained in my memory as a confession by an opponent of the education effected by savings and of the benefit conferred on society by savings banks. I make it the text for the remarks which I will address to you on this occasion.

We hear a great deal in these days about social discontent. It seems to be taken for granted that discontent is a sufficient proof of grievance which third parties are bound to take cognizance of and redress. It might be argued with far greater plausibility that discontent is a proof of prosperity. If you look around the world today you will find that discontent is greatest where the chances are greatest. A man who has never had anything or a chance to get anything is not discontented: he rests contented with what he has always been accustomed to. Let him enjoy an opportunity and win something and the effect will be to excite his wish to win more. There is

more discontent in one house in the United States or in England than in the whole Russian Empire. Discontent exists, then, where there are opportunities, and it is a stimulus to take advantage of opportunities. In that case it is an agency which produces achievement and drives on what we call progress. In other cases discontent is a result of conviction that opportunities have been lost and that it is too late to recover them. Then again, discontent is the twin sister of envy, when it is seen that others have profited better by opportunities. In no case does discontent, as a naked fact, prove anything, and when the details are known it never is proof of a grievance.

Our social philosophers, however, as I have said, assume that discontent is a legitimate and imperative demand for a remedy. They treat it as a social phenomenon, and the remedies which they propose are societal, that is, they are in the nature of devices and regulations which call for the action of the agencies of society. So far as these social philosophers get their way, we find that it is legislation which is set at work, and this legislation imposes tasks on functionaries and institutions. The net final and certain result is new burdens on taxpayers. Discontent is not diminished; it is generally increased. If you get a report of the operation of any of these devices which have already been adopted you will find it full of criticism, perhaps of derision, of the device. It is pointed out how crude the notion was; how ignorant of the conditions; how irrelevant to the purpose in view.

I will not now, however, dwell upon this aspect of social measures to cure discontent; what I am now more interested in is the education exerted by all this philosophy and all these devices on the people on whom

they are brought to bear. The social philosophy which has been in fashion for a century past has educated us in the notion that we ought all to be "happy" (as the phrase goes) on this earth, and that, if we are not so, we ought to cry out, and then that somebody is bound to come and take care of us. Liberty, equality, and happiness have been declared to be natural rights, which is interpreted to mean that they were laid in our cradles as our endowment for the battle of life. Every human being, on this theory, comes into the world with an outfit and a patrimony of metaphysical, if not of physical, goods. This doctrine is, of course, very popular and the men who preach it are sure of popular applause and political power. Tell a man that just because he has been born, he ought to have and enjoy all the highest acquisitions of civilization without labor, self-denial, or study, and that he is a victim of injustice if he does not possess all those good things, and he will be sure to be delighted. Some of these grand old eighteenth-century dogmas which lie on the borderline between politics and social philosophy have been found very much in the way in our own history of the last twelve months. They have been pushed aside as out of date. Perhaps we may get an incidental advantage from recent history if we can throw them all overboard together, but it is more likely that the buncombe element in them has too much value for political purposes to be sacrificed, and so we shall see that retained. We may be very sure that all these theories of world beatification can produce nothing but disillusion and disappointment for those who put faith in them, and disintegration for the society in which they are current. The human race never received any gratuitous outfit of any kind whatever; no heathen myth ever was more silly and empty than such a notion; talk about the

"boon of nature" and the "banquet of life" and the "free gift of land" is more idle than fairy tales. We can speak nowadays with some positive knowledge about the primitive condition of the human race on earth, assuming now that the facts about the primitive condition of man have some bearing on our modern social controversies. We know that the human animal is, by nature, more helpless in the face of nature than many other animals, and that nature did not start the human animal off with any other rights than those of all the other animals. The human race came upon this globe with no outfit at all. The mere task of existing and continuing here was so great that the human race was taxed to the utmost to meet it. The obvious proof of that is that large groups of men have, in innumerable instances, utterly perished from the face of the earth. These are facts of knowledge at the present time and so far as I know they are not disputed by anybody.

I have already intimated that these facts about the primitive order of things have very little value for modern social controversies. Their value lies in quite another direction. If we men have, to any extent, conquered the task of existence, if we have risen to some command over nature, and if we have created a domain of rights between ourselves, it is by civilization that we have done it. The good things were not given to us gratuitously at the outset; they are the product of the toil and suffering of mankind. They belong at the end, not at the beginning. The people who are nowadays examining the product and passing judgment on it are only betraying their own ignorance and folly. They are quite dissatisfied with it; they write books, hold conventions, and pass resolutions about how we ought to change it, and they draft ideas about how they would like to recon-

struct it. If we arrive at some correct idea of what society is and what civilization is, we shall regard all such speculations as more absurd than witchcraft or astrology. We are the children of the society in which we were born. It makes us. We are products of the civilization of our generation. Only a handful of men can react upon the society and the age in which they live so as to modify it at all. They are the very *élite* of the human race, and after all what they can do is only infinitesimal. Civilization means the art of living on this earth. All men have always been trying to learn it, and all that now is in the order of society is the product of this struggle of ages. It pours along in a mighty flood which bears us all with it; in it are all the efforts, passions, interests, and strife of men. It is the play of these upon each other which produces the heaving and swaying of the flood and determines its vast modifications of direction. If you come to a faint understanding of this, the man with a scheme in his pocket for the "reorganization of society" is made to appear very ridiculous.

The instrumentality by which, from the beginning, man has won and held every step of this development of civilization, is capital. Some people talk about ideas and philosophy which, they think, have ruled the affairs of men. The ideas are only secondary. The philosophy, when it has acted as a cause, has taken the form of dogma, and has done harm as often as good. We may take illustrations in proof from the present time. There is a dogma afloat that labor alone makes wealth, so that the whole product should belong of right to the laborer. Another dogma is that limiting the hours of labor would make work for more laborers, and another is that any wealth which one man accumulates is so much taken from some or all other men. Another is that all increase

in the value of land or franchises is due to the social organization and activity, and, therefore, should not go to the holders. These dogmas are all false, but they are of great scope. They are great fighting dogmas because they serve interests. It is for this reason that they win acceptance, because the great reason for inventing dogmas, principles, and phrases is to use them in controversy. These dogmas, therefore, which I have mentioned will, if adopted as the norm of legislation, produce destructive convulsions in society and nothing else. In the meantime the social development is going on by slow accretions which nobody notices; they are won by adjustments between the interests of men who meet new problems every day and solve them as well as they can under the conditions prevailing. These adjustments are all made by means of capital, because the interests are all matters of capital, and all the readjustments are secured by capital. In their turn they favor the creation of capital, because the readjustments which serve interests always mean attempts to win a given result by a smaller expenditure of labor and capital.

Others think that "organization" is the great force which has made civilization; they think that organization is arbitrary and subject to manipulation, and consequently it is upon the organization that they bring their efforts to bear. Organization has, of course, been a commanding phenomenon in the development of civilization. A student of that development is not likely to disregard organization. For myself, I am convinced that much is yet to be gained by better appreciation of the element of organization. But organization is only the *mode* under which the work of life goes on. It is not a force — it never can force anything. It has to do with the smoothness and harmony of the operations. In

human society, in its lower forms, organization has always produced itself spontaneously and automatically and has, therefore, just suited itself to the case. It has sometimes become traditional and dogmatic, and for that reason it has become a hindrance, preventing necessary readjustments. Then societal convulsions and revolutions have occurred. In civilized society organization is equally spontaneous and automatic. In the civil organization some element of arbitrary action has become possible, and this it is apparently which has caused the notion that societal organization is a thing subject to conventions and resolutions. In regard to the civil organization, however, the chance of some arbitrary action has only introduced an element of risk and peril, just as an intelligent being runs the risk of going wrong where an instinctive being never has to face any question at all. All attempts so far made to extend the domain of policy in social matters have resulted only in doubt and in warnings of danger; the proposition to adopt a policy of organization can never do anything but disturb the harmony of the societal system which is its greatest advantage. They never will really change the societal organization, for it is already controlled by the mighty forces of interest. For instance: if so-called trusts are now a real step in the evolution of the industrial organization, a legislative policy of sweeping and destructive opposition to them is vain, and after producing great confusion and animosity and loss, will have to be abandoned. The case of department stores is similar and more simple and obvious. If the wages organization is suited to the present conditions of industry, it is quite useless to try to invent any organization of labor to supersede it. On the other hand, we may, from this case, see how the organization changes, for if the interests of men are not

served by the wages organization they will seek to modify it in the detail in which it is unsatisfactory, whence it may follow in time that some different organization will be gradually evolved to take its place. Harmony of action, with the highest possible satisfaction of interests, is the point of equilibrium towards which the organization is always tending. Those men nowadays who can foresee the next steps to be taken to advance on this line are the great generals of the modern industrial army. If the organization is bad, it can waste and impede the effort; if it is good, it can allow the effort to reach its maximum result under the conditions. That is the sum of all that can be said about organization.

We must return then to the proposition already made. If men are not now in beastliness and utter want, it is by virtue of labor and self-denial. Labor and self-denial have been embodied in useful things, that is, capital. The things won on the one stage have become new instrumentalities on the next stage. It is not strange that the growth has been so slow, especially in its earlier stages, when we see how hard the struggle has been, and how much it has been at war with human nature. It is only when we have gained some conception of the painful and toilsome effort by which every step has been won, that we can estimate at its full value the civilization which we have inherited; but then, too, we are driven to believe that we never can gain anything more except by the same means. The great reason why the advance of civilization has been so slow is that it has never gone forward steadily. Its progress has been broken up. It has been broken up by ignorance and superstition, which is, of course, simply saying that it never could go on faster than men's knowledge at that stage could carry it. It has also been broken up by passion, and by strife over ques-

tions of policy. All this remains just the same now as it ever was. Discord, strife, and war break up the orderly and co-operative effort to reach a higher satisfaction of our interests — which seems to be alone worthy of intelligent and civilized men. The ignorance, folly, and strife destroy capital; the orderly and well-organized efforts to satisfy, create and preserve capital. The presence of capital does not insure the extension of civilization, for the capital may be wasted by error or it may be employed entirely in an increase of population; but an extension of civilization without an increase of effective capital or a diminution of members is impossible.

It may seem to you that the course of thought on which I have so far led you was somewhat too academical or philosophical for this occasion, but I am now ready to return to the orator and the savings bank depositors whom I mentioned at the outset. The facts and ideas which I have presented to you show that the savings bank depositor is a hero of civilization, for he is helping in the accumulation of that capital which is the indispensable prerequisite of all we care for and all we want to do here on earth. The more convinced you are that the notions and devices which are offered to us by social speculators as the means of social progress are all vain, and that the whole effort to find some means of easily making everybody happy is a waste of time, the more you will be thrown back on the industrial virtues as the only moral resources at our command which enable us men to fight the battle of life with success. The industrial virtues are industry, frugality, prudence, and temperance. We cannot, however, deny the presence of another element which is powerful in determining our success — the element of good or ill fortune. It is true that men have fortune, or destiny, or Divine Providence at hand as a convenient

agency on which to throw the blame for the consequences of their own acts, especially for those acts which are violations of the industrial virtues; but when all is said in correction of the popular abuse of luck, it is useless to deny that good or ill fortune may make or mar the success of men in spite of their most careful endeavors. This element, however, is irrational; there is an element in it of which we are ignorant. Therefore, it is beyond our command and we have to submit to it and make the best of it. Our only means of dealing with it, where we can do so, is to meet it co-operatively as we do in insurance.

Returning, then, to the industrial virtues, I repeat that they are our only moral resource for winning success in the battle of life. The greater the disadvantages under which one starts in life, the higher the value of these virtues for winning the first foothold and making the first step to something better. There is reason for profound faith in any device which is proposed for societal improvement if, upon strict analysis, we can find that it will touch the springs of industrial virtue and raise the industrial virtues to higher activity. There is no ground for faith in any device which does not stimulate those virtues. It is not necessary to add that if devices which are proposed are found upon examination to stimulate envy or vanity, or fondness for talk, or a desire to live by one's wits, they are only mischievous. It is not easy for us to form estimates of each other's virtues, especially when we look at each other in classes, but the savings bank depositor, as a type, gives the surest and most concrete evidence of the industrial virtues. He must be industrious, frugal, prudent, and temperate. He is a capitalist; he is getting in hand that power which, as I have said, has created and now upholds all civilization. He is winning a share in its power. He is getting the

upper hand of the tasks of life. He is fortifying himself against bad luck and disaster. He is developing his own character by the self-denial and the persistent pursuit of a selected purpose which he is obliged to practise. You find nowhere else such guarantees of sound judgment, sober reason, and moderate temper as are offered by the fact of saving. There is no other guarantee of good citizenship which is so simple and positive, and at the same time so far-reaching, as the possession of savings. The seats-full of savings bank depositors who went out of the lecture proved it.

The old classical saying was: he who has wife and children has given pledges to fortune. He has opened avenues by which misfortune can reach him through other lives. But capital is the chief means of protecting those dependents; it gives education to the children and puts them on a higher plane for the battle of life than that on which their parents stood. It is right to conceive of the human race on this earth as engaged in an endless battle with the conditions of existence, striving so to modify them that men may get more out of their lives in the way of satisfaction of the possibilities of human nature. For a century past the current popular notion has been that the way to win the battle is to "raise the lower classes." The notion seems to be that the vicious criminal and poverty-stricken classes are a certain number of human beings who are miserable or harmful. It is thought that, if this number can be cured of social disease, all will be well. This notion is based on childish misconceptions as to what society is and as to the nature of social disease. Projects to abolish poverty are worthy of an age which has undertaken to discuss the abolition of disease. Why not abolish death and be as gods once for all? Why not resolve that everybody shall be good and happy? Why

not vote that everybody shall have whatever he wants? Why trifle with details? If these agencies can get us anything, they can just as well get us everything. The trouble with creation out of nothing is not to make a universe; it is to make an atom of star-dust. If, then, we turn away from all these notions and devices and try to understand the case of man on earth just as it is, we find that our task always is to do the best we can under the conditions in which we are and with the means which we possess. Then it appears that capital is the means with which we do it and that it is by capital spent on the education and training of the rising generation that we keep up that advancing fight against the ills of life to which I have referred. I do not suppose that the savings bank depositors who left the lecture knew much about all this, but that class of men have a way of their own of getting at things. The possession of capital gives an acuteness of insight into whatever affects capital; men who have tried saving have not much patience with rhetoric and dogmatism about how to get on in life, and we know how acute they become in perceiving that the upshot of the schemes is to make them share their savings with those who have never done any saving. I suppose that when the savings bank depositors got up and left the lecture, it was an expression of this impatience.

I never saw a poem about the savings bank depositor. Poems are all written about heroes, kings, soldiers, and lovers; there are plenty of poems about glory, and love, and ambition, and even about poverty, but saving is passed by as sordid and mean — utterly unpoetical. It has always been thought noble to spend and mean to save, which only shows how far we are yet, with all our boasting, preaching, and discussing, from sound standards of judgment about the operations of society. It has, how-

ever, always been recognized that, among subjects of dramatic interest and power, the hero struggling against adversity with fortitude and perseverance is one of the grandest. In our modern commercial and unadventurous life, you will hardly find nobler examples of it than those seats-full of people who, after saving a little to make a beginning, had built two tenement cottages the mortgages on which they were trying to pay off.

Some people will answer that they see the utility and even the moral grandeur of savings by poor people, but that they dread and disapprove of accumulation. If the savings bank depositor saves enough to pass on up into the class of large and independent investors and finally to enter the class technically known as "capitalists," our social philosophers withdraw their sympathy and respect from him and denounce him because he is rich. Savings banks would then seem to be useful institutions because they are vicious only up to a certain point. Savings banks are the most efficient institutions for aggregating capital which we possess. That is the most useful function which they perform, when we regard them from the standpoint of society, not of the individual depositor. In fact, we must believe that, if the motives of thrift could be made to actuate the population far more widely than they now do, resources of capital could be found in the increased savings of the mass of the population of which we have at present but little idea. Savings are like taxes: if you want big results you must look to the aggregation of millions of small sums from the whole population, not to the aggregate of a few big sums from the millionaires.

In this connection the movement of the current rate of interest, regarding that rate as a stimulus to saving, is a very interesting and important phenomenon. If we knew more about the causes of the fluctuations of the

interest rate we should gain a deeper insight than we now possess into some of the operations of the industrial system; especially we should gain a text which we very much need for the effects of legislation and taxes. The rate at present favors the borrower, not the depositor. If such a tendency of the rate was a result of an accumulation of capital more rapid than the extension of enterprise, it would no doubt be advantageous; it would bring about a reaction which would produce readjustments and would be ultimately healthful. I find it difficult to conceive of an increase of capital in excess of the extension of enterprise, under the circumstances of industry and of public temper which characterize our society. The fact that the interest rate is as low here as in Western Europe, or even lower, seems to me to be abnormal and even irrational. It seems to me to point to errors of legislation. Our people have been congratulating themselves for two years on an enormous balance of trade in our favor. We have had large crops of cereals when other people had small ones, and so we have sold the whole at high prices; and the consequence is that we have paid our debts, have got out of bad times into good ones, have dispelled our political anxieties, and have capital out in Europe. But when we try to draw home our credits we find that our rate of interest falls — within a year we have seen it fall a full point. I find one statesman quoted in a newspaper as saying: "If present conditions continue, it looks as if all the gold in the world will come into the United States." That is probably the most grotesque notion that could enter anybody's head. It seems clear that the fluctuation which we have experienced does not correspond to the normal action of the forces which should produce the rate of interest, and that the effects of it are not subject for congratulation. A higher rate than that now

prevailing would give tone to the money market; it would be a benefit to small investors; it would remove perils which threaten speculation, and would lessen the dangers of discount banking; it would be a benefit to enterprise by giving greater steadiness and sobriety, especially as to the future; it would restore the relation which should exist between a new country and old ones. How can things be in a normal and healthful condition when we cannot earn greater interest on capital in a new country than what people will bid for it in old ones?

I was led to notice the rate of interest because I was speaking of the possible increase in the accumulation of capital which might be produced if the motives of saving could be stimulated throughout the mass of the people. By the side of the facts to which I have referred, and which are sometimes interpreted as showing that the formation of capital at present outstrips the extension of enterprise, there are other facts which show enormous demand for capital on account of unprecedented extensions of enterprise. It is idle folly to meet these phenomena with wailings about the danger of the accumulation of great wealth in few hands. The phenomena themselves prove that we have tasks to perform which require large aggregations of capital. Moreover, the capital, to be effective, must be in few hands, for the simple reason that there are very few men who are able to handle great aggregations of capital. This is also the reason why the attempts to execute great enterprises by the state or municipality, that is, by elected officers, especially in a democratic republic, are sure to be wasteful and comparative failures. The men who are competent to organize great enterprises and to handle great amounts of capital must be found by natural selection, not by political election. It is plainly childish to attack those elements of a case which

are essential to it. If the aim is to establish tests and guarantees, or regulations, then there is room for discussion, but it is evident folly to say that we want a certain result and then to say that we will not consent to the most fundamental conditions of what we want. The aggregation of large amounts of capital in few hands is the first condition of the fulfilment of the most important tasks of civilization which now confront us. If, therefore, the view which I have suggested is correct — that, in spite of some present appearances to the contrary, there is to be, in the near future, a greatly increased demand for capital — then a great increase of the popular desire to save would be contributory to the present needs of society.

I have suggested, in this paper, that the savings bank depositor gets an education and development of character from the practise of saving. He gets a point of view and a way of looking at things which are substantially the same as those of all capitalists. The seats-full of savings bank depositors whom I mentioned at the outset incurred the ire of the agitator because they showed this. He was addressing poor men and men of the wages class, to which they belonged, but instead of responding to his class appeal as he wanted them to do, they showed the sentiments of the capitalist class. Hence his dissatisfaction with them. We have had experience of the political value and importance of the same conservative sentiments and property interests of the small capitalists. It is a matter for regret that the savings bank depositor does not know more about the investment of his own savings. If he knew, so to express it, where his money is, how it is being used, how the interest which he receives is won, and what is the nature of the political risks and perils to which his savings may be

exposed, the social and political consequences would be most beneficial.

I once also heard another orator who was dilating upon the ills of life declare that the great cause of human woe was the "devil of interest." There is no doubt that interest is an awful devil. Your feeling towards this devil, however, depends on whether you are working for him or he is working for you. If you are working for him, especially if you have bound yourself to terms which are imprudent, beyond your strength, and full of gambling risk, then he is an awful taskmaster. You dare not eat, or sleep, or play. Pay-day seems to come every other day. Instead of winning release by work, you may see your load grow bigger and bigger, in spite of all you do, until you come to ruin. Therefore, when you are going to work for him, which we all have to do sometimes, you must be sure that you undertake only what you can accomplish within the conditions in which you find yourself. But if the devil of interest is working for you, he will work while you eat, and sleep, and play, and while you work to earn more. You must be careful to have him well harnessed and to give him proper superintendence and directions. Then, if time seems to you to slip away rapidly, and if old age comes on apace, the devil of interest will give you the only consolation you can get for your failing powers. When you turn to your savings bank book you will see that your capital is increasing just as rapidly as the flight of time, and that it will be ready to support your existence when your ability to work gives out. I have spoken about the power and beneficence of capital to maintain civilization; this last is its power and beneficence to guide the fate and sustain the happiness of the individual.

SOCIOLOGICAL FALLACIES

SOCIOLOGICAL FALLACIES

[1884]

In the extension of modern arts and industry the mass of mankind have been taught to expect comfort and ease, if not luxury; we boast so constantly of what we have accomplished in this direction that many believe we can do away with all hardship and establish universal well-being, if we choose. In our discourses, debates, and discussions we assume that the end for which society exists is the greatest happiness of the greatest number; it is laid down as an axiom of political science that political institutions should produce that result. Our philosophers encourage this doctrine and encourage the application to themselves of this test. It is, indeed, affirmed that our civilization is a failure because poverty continues to exist, and that a society in which poverty continues to exist is fit only to have "war" made upon it with fire, sword, and dynamite by any one who is still poor. Yet here is a plain question: is there any other man in the world who is to blame for the fact that I am poor?

The triumph of civilization is in the fact that we are not all steeped in poverty and misery. The student of sociology is more and more appalled as he goes on gaining fuller knowledge of what the primitive condition of man was, and a more definite conception of what human life must once have been. A missionary who resided among the Fuegians heard a shouting often at sunrise; when he asked what it meant he was told: "People very sad; cry very much." This instinctive and childlike howling

with which they greeted a new day of misery is the most pathetic, and, at the same time, most rational and fit manifestation which we should expect to find among such people. Why are any of us today better off than the Fuegians? Why are we not sunk in misery and squalor, and destitute of all things fitted to serve human need and raise men out of slavery to nature? The triumph of civilization is that all of us are above that stage, and that some of us are emancipated from poverty.

It is also asserted by some that there are men or classes among us who have no share in the gains of civilization. Such an assertion rests on a great misconception of facts. There is not a person in a civilized state who does not share in the inheritance of institutions, knowledge, ideas, doctrines, etc., which come down as fruits of civilization; we take these things in by habit and routine, and suppose that they come of themselves, or are innate. It would be one immense gain from the study of sociology if men should learn to know by what prodigious struggles all these things have been won. Every man in a civilized state inherits a status of rights which form the basis and stay of his civil existence. These rights are often called "natural"; in truth they are the product of the struggles of thousands of generations. Men, before they were capable of reflection or had developed science, had but one process for learning: that was by their mistakes and at the price of all their experiments which failed. Our inheritance of established rights is the harvested product of the few successful experiments out of thousands which failed.

If we turn to look at capital, the case is not different. Every item of capital is productive of utilities which are immeasurable in amount and broad in variety; only a few of the simplest of them can be appropriated by the

man who "owns" the capital. A man who tilled the ground was already comparatively far up in civilization. He began with a pointed stick or the horn of an animal; by thousands of years of experiment and invention a spade was perfected. How can we measure the utility of a spade as compared with that of the pointed stick or the horn? That question would include the greater power of production of the spade and also the lessened pain and toil of the laborer. Now, if A owns a spade today, can he make B, who has none, pay him for the use of the spade an amount in any sense proportioned to the advantage of using a spade as compared with using a pointed stick? Certainly he cannot. Neither can A, if he keeps his spade, in any manner win by the use of it a superiority over his neighbors to be measured by the superiority of the spade to the stick. All but a small margin of the gains of civilization enters into a common stock which nobody can appropriate; it goes to make up a kind of industrial atmosphere around every one born into the society. Though a man may never have handled a plow, he gets his food under the conditions of a society which possesses plows; another may never have handled a pen or a type, but he gets his reading matter under the same conditions as a man who has pens and types. The same is true of every item of capital. Knowledge of the facts of history enables us to see when we look at a coin, a knife, a lead-pencil, a match, a book, a lock, a coat, the product of thousands of generations of tireless efforts to serve human needs more completely and easily with the materials offered by the earth.

What we might call the metaphysical side of capital is its most important side in the history of civilization. Every bit of capital presents devices, methods, processes, which are of general application. If one of us

has a task to perform he unconsciously begins to review the various processes or devices with which he is familiar, to see if he cannot employ one of them. Springs, catches, levers, cams, etc., are presented to us all the time in capital which we do not own; the devices are available for new applications. He who owns the capital cannot appropriate these; his use of capital is only the most primary and simple of all the utilities which it offers, and he cannot get out those utilities without entering into cooperation and exchange with his neighbors through which they share the primary utilities. It is interesting to watch children at play, to see the uses to which they put their toys, the combinations, plans, devices, and processes which they will work out; to notice how they use what they have seen, how they collect experience of the qualities of substances, how they bring all their knowledge, to bear; and to reflect that they possess at five or six years of age a store of facts, knowledge, skill, and the like which it cost the human race thousands of years to accumulate. Most grown people use the products of civilization as unconsciously as children, and as much by habit and routine; but it is monstrous ignorance, when the point is raised for discussion, to affirm that some now do not share in the fruits of civilization.

If any one is still unconvinced of what I have here said, let him try to cut down a tree with a flint hatchet, or to produce fire with a fire drill, or to grind corn with one stone rubbed on another. Intense labor kept up over a long period was the price of everything to the primitive man; that is, he worked very hard and got very little. If a modern hod-carrier had to work a fire drill until he got a light, and if he could then strike a match to get another, he would see whether he had any share in the fruits of civilization.

The sentimentalists sometimes bewail the loss of skill due to machinery and division of labor. The fact is as alleged, but it dates from a point much further back than the factory system — it dates from the dawn of civilization. The primitive man developed great skill of eye, hand, and ear, because his tools were so poor that the wear all came on his nerves. He could accomplish nothing unless his skill was high; the man, for instance, who had to fashion a flint axe by flaking off pieces under great pressure must either work very long and spoil a great many or be very skilful. When he came to bore a hole in it with a piece of horn, some sand and water, he must work long, skilfully, and with a true eye, or he would spoil his whole work. A Swiss anthropologist has made a stone axe, with such tools as a primitive man possessed, polished but not perforated, in five hours and forty minutes of working time with intervals of rest. As tools have been perfected, men have put the work on the tools and spared their nerves. Take, for comparison, the manufacture of a modern axe, which requires more skill than many modern processes. In saving skill we have saved men. The division of labor does not probably lessen skill, but it concentrates it in narrow lines, and produces routine and monotony. Poetry is what really suffers, but the loss is more than compensated for by poetry in literary and other purer forms; we can spare poetry from industry when we have literature, drama, or art, just as we can afford to use bolted flour when we have a meat diet.

Another notion for which there is no foundation in fact is that there was more liberty in early ages of the world or in simpler societies than there now is; that is, liberty in the sense of freedom from restraint upon choice or caprice. The primitive man had no liberty in this sense

or any other. He was a slave to nature, and that meant that he was in continual terror before dangers which he did not know, could not measure, and could not guard against. All that we learn of primitive races shows us that nature is appalling to them; they have intelligence enough to believe more and fear more than brutes. If we look at their social regulations we find that these fetter the individual in relentless traditions and rules. The impulsiveness, waywardness, and self-will of the savage are delusive if they are regarded as manifestations of liberty. The development of individual liberty, and its reconciliation with social order, is one of the grandest of those developments of original antagonism into the ultimate harmony which go to make up civilization. We have not, however, by civilization emancipated individual choice and caprice; the civilized man has won the social harmony by submitting to orderly and regular industry, under which a savage would pine and die just as surely as a cotton operative would perish in Patagonia or Greenland.

Now, the achievements of the human race have been accomplished by the *élite* of the race; there is no ground at all in history for the notion that the masses of mankind have provided the wisdom and done the work. There are, in this whole region of thought, a vast mass of dogmas and superstitions which will have to be corrected either by hard thinking or great suffering. A man is good for something only so far as he thinks, knows, tries, or works. If we put a great many men together, those of them who carry on the society will be those who use reflection and forethought, and exercise industry and self-control. Hence the dogma that all men are equal is the most flagrant falsehood and the most immoral doctrine which men have ever believed; it means that the man who has

not done his duty is as good as the one who has done his duty, and it takes away all sense from the teachings of the moralists, when they instruct youth that men who pursue one line of action will go down to loss and shame, and those who pursue another course will go up to honor and success. It is, on the contrary, a doctrine of the first moral and sociological importance that truth, wisdom, and righteousness come only by painstaking, study, and striving. These things are so hard that it is only the few who attain to them. These few carry on human society now as they always have done.

Hence we see that so soon as the exigencies of life are felt, men are differentiated according to their power to cope with them into "better" or "worse" with reference to personal and social value; and as soon as any conquest is achieved which contributes to civilization, the inequality between the men who won it and those who did not win it is established as a positive fact. Men are very unequal in what they get out of life, but they are still more unequal in what they put into it. The most unequal bargain has always been made by the men who have done the world's thinking for it.

In nothing have we, as yet, made so little progress as in the art of civil government, or, more generally, in our political organization. We have abandoned hereditary government because we regard it as illogical; it affords no guarantees that fit persons will hold power; it is stable, but it is not flexible or plastic. Have we, however, as yet produced political methods under democratic-republican government which afford us any guarantees that fit persons alone will obtain power? It is very certain that we have not done this. We do not fear for the stability of the civil organization. We desire flexibility and plasticity, but if we have lost the notion of fitness alto-

gether, and are irritated by it when it is brought to our notice, we have made no step in advance.

The fact is, that the vague encouragement which has been given, for a century, to impossible dreams and senseless ambitions has produced social problems with which our sociology is in no position to cope. How far we are from it may be judged when we find it asserted that the end of society is justice. To ask what is the end of man, or society, or the earth, is to put a teleological or theological problem. Such a problem has been discussed in regard to man; if it has ever been discussed in regard to society, it is at least new. It is also idle. The scientific view of the matter is that a thing exists for reasons which lie in its antecedents and causes, not in its purposes or destiny. Human society exists because it is, and has come to be on earth because forces which were present must produce it. It is, therefore, utterly unscientific to regard man or society as a means to any further end. The state exists to provide justice, but the state is only one among a number of social organizations. It is parallel with the others, and has its own functions. To confuse the state with society is to produce a variety of errors, not the least of which is to smuggle statecraft into political economy. It is plain that, until such courses of confusion are put entirely beyond the pale of social discussions, our social science cannot make very rapid progress. The sources of confusion lie at the very beginning, and they vitiate our political economy and political science into their remotest developments. An attentive study of any of the current controversies will show that they arise from fundamentally confused or erroneous notions of society, and that they cannot be solved without a rectification, on a scientific basis, of our data and our doctrines about human life on this earth.

WHAT OUR BOYS ARE READING

WHAT OUR BOYS ARE READING

[1880]

Few gentlemen who have occasion to visit news offices can have failed to notice the periodical literature for boys, which has been growing up during the last few years. The increase in the number of these papers and magazines, and the appearance from time to time of new ones which, to judge by the pictures, are always worse than the old, seem to indicate that they find a wide market. Moreover, they appear not only among the idle and vicious boys in great cities, but also among schoolboys whose parents are careful about the influences brought to bear on their children. No student of social phenomena can pass with neglect facts of this kind — so practical and so important in their possible effects on society.

These periodicals contain stories, songs, mock speeches, and negro minstrel dialogues — and nothing else. The literary material is either intensely stupid, or spiced to the highest degree with sensation. The stories are about hunting, Indian warfare, California desperado life, pirates, wild sea adventure, highwaymen, crimes and horrible accidents, horrors (tortures and snake stories), gamblers, practical jokes, the life of vagabond boys, and the wild behavior of dissipated youths in great cities. This catalogue is exhaustive — there are no other stories. The dialogue is short, sharp, and continuous. It is broken by the minimum of description and by no preaching. It is almost entirely in slang of the most exaggerated kind,

and of every variety — that of the sea, of California, and of the Bowery; of negroes, "Dutchmen," Yankees, Chinese, and Indians, to say nothing of that of a score of the most irregular and questionable occupations ever followed by men. When the stories even nominally treat of school-life they say nothing of *school*-life. There is simply a succession of practical jokes, mischief, outrages, heroic but impossible feats, fighting and horrors, but nothing about the business of school, any more than if the house in which the boys live were a summer boarding-house. The sensational incidents in these stories are introduced by force, apparently for the mere purpose of producing a highly spiced mixture.

One type of hero who figures largely in these stories is the vagabond boy in the streets of a great city, in the Rocky Mountains, or at sea. Sometimes he has some cleverness in singing, or dancing, or ventriloquism, or negro acting, and he gains a precarious living while roving about. This vagabond life of adventure is represented as interesting and enticing, and when the hero rises from vagabond life to flash life, that is represented as success. Respectable home life, on the other hand, is not depicted at all and is only referred to as stupid and below the ambition of a clever youth. Industry and economy in some regular pursuit, or in study, are never mentioned at all. Generosity does not consist in even luxurious expenditure, but in wasting money. The type seems to be that of the gambler, one day "flush" and wasteful, another day ruined and in misery.

There is another type of boy who sometimes furnishes the hero of a story, but who also figures more or less in all of them. That is the imp of mischief — the sort of boy who is an intolerable nuisance to the neighborhood. The stories are told from the standpoint of the boy, so

that he seems to be a fine fellow, and all the world, which is against him, is unjust and overbearing. His father, the immediate representative of society, executes its judgments with the rod, which again is an insult to the high-spirited youth and produces on his side either open war or a dignified retreat to some distant region.

These stories are not markedly profane, and they are not obscene. They are indescribably vulgar. They represent boys as engaging all the time in the rowdy type of drinking. The heroes are either swaggering, vulgar swells of the rowdy style, or they are in the vagabond mass below the rowdy swell. They are continually associating with criminals, gamblers, and low people who live by their wits. The theater of the stories is always disreputable. The proceedings and methods of persons of the criminal and disreputable classes who appear in the stories, are all described in detail, so that the boy reader obtains a theoretical and literary acquaintance with methods of fraud and crime. Sometimes drunkenness is represented in its disgrace and misery but generally drinking is represented as jolly and entertaining, and there is no suggestion that boys who act as the boys in these stories do ever have to pay any penalty for it in after life. The persons who are held up to admiration are the heroes and heroines of bar rooms, concert saloons, variety theaters, and negro minstrel troupes.

A few illustrations may serve to bring out some of the foregoing statements. One of the school stories before us has a "local color" which is purely English, although the names are Americanized. The mixture is ridiculous in the extreme. The hero is the son of a "country gentleman" of Ohio, and comes to school with an old drunkard, "ex-butler" of the Ohio country gentleman, whom he allows to join him at the Grand Central Depot. This

scandalous old rascal is kept in the story apparently because an old drunkard is either a good instrument or a good victim for practical jokes. The hero goes to dine with a gentleman whose place, near the school, is called the "Priory." While waiting for dinner he goes out for a stroll in the "Park." He rescues a girl from drowning, sends back to school for another suit of clothes, goes out again and takes a ride on a bison, is thrown off, strikes, in falling, a professor, who is fortunately fat enough to break his fall, goes to the "snake house" with the professor, is fascinated by the rattlesnake which gets loose, seizes the reptile and throws it away after it has bitten through the professor's trousers — all before dinner. All the teachers, of course, are sneaks and blackguards. In this same story, one of the assistant teachers (usher, he is called) gets drunk and insults the principal, whereupon the latter, while he directs some of the boys to work a garden pump, holds the nozzle and throws water on the assistant, who lies helplessly drunk on the grass — all of which is enforced by a picture. There is not a decent good boy in the story; there is not even the old type of sneaking good boy. The sneaks and bullies are all despicable in the extreme. The heroes are continually devising mischief which is mean and cruel, but which is here represented as smart and funny. They all have a daredevil character, and brave the principal's rod as one of the smallest dangers of life. There is a great deal of the traditional English brutality in exaggerated forms. The nearest approach to anything respectable is that *after* another boy has been whipped for mischief done by the hero, the latter tells an accomplice that they ought to have confessed, whereat the friend replies with the crushing rejoinder that then there would only have been three flogged instead of one.

A character very common in these stories is the city youth, son of a rich father who does not give his son as much pocket-money as the latter considers suitable. This constitutes stinginess on the father's part, although it might be considered pardonable, seeing that these young men drink champagne every day, treat the crowd generally when they drink, and play billiards for one hundred dollars a game. The father, in this class of stories, is represented as secretly vicious and hypocritically pious. In the specimen of this class before us the young man is "discovered" in the police court as a prisoner, whence he is remanded to the Tombs. He has been arrested for collaring a big policeman, to prevent him from overtaking a girl charged with pocket-picking. He interfered because he judged from the girl's face that she was innocent, and it is suggested, for future development in the story, that she was running away from insult and that the cry of "stop thief" was to get help from the police and others to seize her. The hero, who is in prison under an assumed name, now sends for his father's clerk and demands one thousand dollars, saying that otherwise he will declare his real name and disgrace his family. He gets the money. He then sends for a notorious Tombs lawyer, to whom he gives five hundred dollars, and with this sum his release is easily procured. He then starts with his cousin to initiate the latter into life in New York. They go to a thieves' college, where they see a young fellow graduated — his part consists in taking things from the pockets of a hanging figure, to the garments of which bells are attached, without causing the bells to ring. Of this a full-page illustration is given. The two young men then go up the Bowery to a beer saloon, where the hero sustains his character by his vulgar familiarity with the girl waiters. Next they hear a row in a side street; they

find a crowd collected watching a woman who hangs from a third-story window, while her drunken husband beats and cuts her hands to make her fall. The hero solves this situation by drawing his revolver and shooting the man. As he and his companion withdraw unobserved, the former wards off the compliments of the latter by saying modestly that he could not bear to stand there and see such a crowd looking on and not knowing what to do, so he just did the proper thing. Next day the hero, meeting the thieves' college graduate in the corridor of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, agrees to receive and hold for him any booty he may seize in the bar room, which he does. At night he and his friend go to a disreputable masked ball, where the hero recognizes his father in disguise amongst the dancers. Securing a place in the same set, during a pause in the dance he snatches the mask from his own face and his father's at the same moment. This edifying incident is enforced by a full-page illustration. A friend suggests the question: what demon of truthfulness makes the artist put such brutal and vulgar faces on the men? In this class of stories, fathers and sons are represented as natural enemies, and the true position for the son is that of suspicion and armed peace.

Here, again, is a story of a boy who was left in charge of a country grocery store. To amuse his leisure he takes a lump of butter from the stock and greases the platform in front of the store. Several village characters, among them an old maid, the parson, and the squire, come to perform on this arena for the amusement of the youth and one or two of his friends. While the squire is trying to get up or get off the platform, the owner of the grocery returns and he and the squire have a fight on the grass-plot over the question whether the grocer

greased his own platform or not. Next comes Nemesis in the shape of the boy's father. The conversation between these two, and the dénouement, may be worth quoting. In the soliloquy at the end there seems to be a reminiscence of Fisk.

"James," said he, "you are breaking my heart with your incorrigible conduct."

"Is dat a chowder-gag?" calmly inquired Jimmy.

"Slang — slang, always slang!" groaned his father. "James, will you never reform?"

"Don't wanter; I'm good enough now."

"Think of what you might be, a pattern boy, a —"

"Brass-bound angel, silver-plated cherub, little tin missionary on rollers," put in Jimmy, apparently in confidence to a fly on the ceiling.

"Actually sassing his protector," the deacon said. "Oh, James, you wicked son of Belial."

"Pop's name was Dennis, and he was a short-haired Cincinnati ham," indignantly corrected Jimmy. "I don't know anybody named Belial."

The deacon made a horrified mouth.

"Will you never hearken in quietude and meekness of spirit to words of reproval and advice?" said he.

"Darned sight ruther listen to funny stories," muttered Jimmy.

"You are hopeless," sighed the deacon, "and I shall have to chastise you."

"Dat means a week's soreness," Jimmy reflected; then he changed his tune. "Let me off this time, dad, and I'll be the best boy you ever saw after dis. Stay in nights, stop chewing tobacco, clean my teeth every morning, and welt the life out of anybody dat won't say their prayers regular and go to church every day in the week."

The deacon nodded his head the wrong way.

"You can't play that on the old man again," he said; "it's lost its varnish, it's played out. Step up, my son."

Unwillingly Jimmy stepped up.

In a moment he was stepping up more than ever, for the deacon was pelting him all over with a stout switch, which felt the reverse of agreeable.

But finally he was released and crawled dolefully up to bed.

There are things nicer than going to bed at four o'clock on a bright, breezy, fall day, and Jimmy knew so.

"This here is getting awful stale," he meditated, rolling and tossing in his cot, "and you can smother me with fish-cakes if I stand it. I'm going to run away, and come back to dis old one-hoss town when I'm a man, in a gold-band wagon with silver wheels and six Maltese mules a-drawing it. Probably the old man will be in the poorhouse then, swallerin' shadow soup with an iron spoon, and it will make him cranky to think dat he didn't used ter let me have my own way and boss things. Yes, by golly, I'll give him the sublime skip."

The songs and dialogues are almost all utterly stupid. The dialogues depend for any interest they have on the most vapid kind of negro minstrel buffoonery. The songs, without having any distinct character, seem often to be calculated to win applause from tramps and rioters. The verse, of all before us, which has the most point to it, is the following. What the point is requires no elucidation:

> Boss Tweed is a man most talked about now,
> His departure last winter caused a great row;
> Of course we all knew it was not a square game,
> But show me the man who would not do the same.
>
> When Sweeney, Genet and Dick Connolly took flight,
> He stood here alone and made a good fight;
> He did wrong, but when poor men were greatly in need,
> The first to assist them was William M. Tweed.

From the specimens which we have examined we may generalize the following in regard to the views of life which these stories inculcate and the code of morals and manners which they teach.

The first thing which a boy ought to acquire is physical strength for fighting purposes. The feats of strength performed by these youngsters in combat with men and animals are ridiculous in the extreme. In regard to details the supposed code of English brutality prevails, especially in the stories which have English local color, but it is always mixed with the code of the revolver, and in many of the stories the latter is taught in its fulness. These youngsters generally carry revolvers and use them at their good discretion; every youth who aspires to manliness ought to get and carry a revolver.

A boy ought to cheat the penurious father who does not give him as much money as he finds necessary, and ought to compel him to pay. A good way to force him to pay liberally, and at the same time to stop criticizing his son's habits, is to find out his own vices (he always has some) and then to levy blackmail on him. Every boy who does not want to be "green" and "soft," ought to "see the elephant." All fine manly young fellows are familiar with the actors and singers at variety theaters and the girl waiters at concert saloons. As to drinking, the bar room code is taught. The boys stop in at bar rooms all along the street, swallow drinks standing or leaning with rowdy grace on the bar, treat and are treated, and consider it insulting to refuse or to be refused. The good fellows meet every one on a footing of equality — above all in a bar room.

Quiet home life is stupid and unmanly; boys brought up in it never know the world or life. They have to work hard and to bow down to false doctrines which parsons and teachers in league with parents have invented

against boys. To become a true man, a boy must break with respectability and join the vagabonds and the swell mob. No fine young fellow who knows life need mind the law, still less the police — the latter are all stupid louts. If a boy's father is rich and has money, he can easily find smart lawyers (advertisement gratis) who can get the boy out of prison and will dine with him at Delmonico's afterward. The sympathies of a manly young fellow are with criminals against the law, and he conceals crime when he can. Whatever good or ill happens to a young man he should always be gay; — the only ills in question are physical pain or lack of money and these should be borne with gaiety and indifference, but should not alter the philosophy of life.

As to the rod, it is not so easy to generalize. Teachers and parents in these stories act faithfully up to Solomon's precept. When a father flogs his son, the true doctrine seems to be that the son should run away and seek a life of adventure. When he does this he has no difficulty in finding friends, or in living by his wits, so that he makes money and comes back rich and glorious, to find his father in the poorhouse.

These periodicals seem to be intended for boys from twelve to sixteen years of age, although they often treat of older persons. Probably many boys outgrow them and come to see the folly and falsehood of them. It is impossible, however, that so much corruption should be afloat and not exert some influence. We say nothing of the great harm which is done to boys of that age, by the nervous excitement of reading harrowing and sensational stories, because the literature before us only participates in that harm with other literature of far higher pretensions. But what we have said suffices to show that these papers poison boys' minds with views of life which are so base

and false as to destroy all manliness and all chances of true success. How far they are read by boys of good home influences we are, of course, unable to say. They certainly are within the reach of all; they can be easily obtained, and easily concealed, and it is a question for parents and teachers how far this is done. Persons under those responsibilities ought certainly to know what the character of this literature is.

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